Government of Canada Gouvernement du Canada

Implementing the Outcomes of the Second United Nations Conference on Human Settlements (Habitat II):

Canada's Response

June 2001

Canada

Table of Contents

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS i

PREFACE ii

OVERVIEW: THE CANADIAN APPROACH 1

CHAPTER 1. SHELTER 7
- 1.1 Indicators 7
- 1.2 Federal Policies, Legislation, and Programs 10
- 1.3 Provincial Policies, Legislation, and Programs 13
- 1.4 Municipal/local Best Practices 16
- 1.5 Stakeholder Perspectives 17

CHAPTER 2. SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT AND ERADICATION OF POVERTY 20
- 2.1 Indicators 20
- 2.2 Federal Policies, Legislation, and Programs 24
- 2.3 Provincial Policies, Legislation, and Programs 27
- 2.4 Municipal/local Best Practices 31
- 2.5 Stakeholder Perspectives 32

CHAPTER 3. ENVIRONMENTAL MANAGEMENT 34
- 3.1 Indicators 34
- 3.2 Federal Policies, Legislation, and Programs 37
- 3.3 Provincial Policies, Legislation, and Programs 39
- 3.4 Municipal/local Best Practices 41
- 3.5 Stakeholder Perspectives 43

CHAPTER 4. ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT 45
- 4.1 Indicators 45
- 4.2 Federal Policies, Legislation, and Programs 46
- 4.3 Provincial Policies, Legislation, and Programs 48
- 4.4 Municipal/local Best Practices 49
- 4.5 Stakeholder Perspectives 49

CHAPTER 5. GOVERNANCE 51
- 5.1 Indicators 51
- 5.2 Federal Policies, Legislation, and Programs 52
- 5.3 Provincial Policies, Legislation, and Programs 53
- 5.4 Municipal/local Best Practices 57
- 5.5 Stakeholder Perspectives 57

CHAPTER 6. INTERNATIONAL COOPERATION 59
- 6.1 Indicators 59
- 6.2 Federal Policies, Legislation, and Programs 60
- 6.3 Provincial Policies, Legislation, and Programs 62
- 6.4 Stakeholder Perspectives 63

APPENDIX A. STAKEHOLDERS INTERVIEWED

ANNEX: PROVINCIAL REPORTS -- QUEBEC

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Canada Mortgage and Housing Corporation (CMHC) assumed overall responsibility for preparation of this report, with assistance from an Interdepartmental Steering Committee. Marbek Resource Consultants Ltd. undertook all research and writing, with contributions from Greg Lampert, Economic Consultant. Extensive assistance was provided by Statistics Canada and Environment Canada for the indicator data. Many other federal and provincial agencies provided information and input, as did a range of stakeholders.

Provinces and territories that contributed to the development of the Country Report include Ontario, Quebec, New Brunswick, Manitoba, British Columbia, Prince Edward Island, Alberta, Saskatchewan, Newfoundland, and Nunavut.

CMHC gratefully acknowledges all these important contributions to the preparation of this report.

PREFACE

Habitat II and the Habitat Agenda

The Second United Nations Conference on Human Settlements, *Habitat II*, was held in Istanbul, Turkey in June 1996. Habitat II brought together representatives from 171 countries to discuss an issue of global concern: shelter and human settlements in a rapidly urbanizing world.

The countries participating in Habitat II adopted the *Habitat Agenda*, a commitment by the world's nations to improve living conditions in the world's cities, towns, and villages. The Habitat Agenda is a global call to action that offers ". . . a positive vision of sustainable human settlements, where all have adequate shelter, a healthy and safe environment, basic services, and productive and freely chosen employment."[1] The Agenda offers a framework of goals, principles, strategies and commitments intended to guide local, national and international efforts to turn this vision into reality.

United Nations Special Session: Istanbul + 5

In June 2001, five years after Habitat II, the General Assembly of the United Nations will hold a special session, popularly known as *Istanbul + 5*, to review and appraise implementation of the Habitat Agenda worldwide. In preparation for this session, countries have been invited to report on implementation of the Agenda. The United Nations Centre for Human Settlements (UNCHS) has developed reporting guidelines for use in the preparation of the national reports.

In response to the UNCHS invitation, Canada has prepared this *Country Report,* based upon a series of six *Technical Reports.* This report follows the guidelines issued by the UNCHS to the degree possible, recognizing limitations imposed by data availability and resources, and the need to adapt to the Canadian situation and priorities.

Indicators of Progress

Part of this report focusses on qualitative and quantitative data addressing a series of identified indicators. These indicators are intended to measure progress relative to a number of commitments and recommendations in the Habitat Agenda.

Canada's indicators data has been provided, where possible, for Canada as a whole and for each of five major urban areas: Vancouver, Calgary, Toronto, Montreal, and Halifax. These are the largest urban areas in, respectively, British Columbia, the Prairie Provinces, Ontario, Quebec, and the Atlantic Provinces. To ensure reasonable reliability and comparability between the five urban centres, Statistics Canada was used as the main source of data. For reasons of readability, this report does not identify specific data sources; instead, this information is cited in the background *Technical Reports.*

---

[1] Source: Habitat Agenda, paragraph 21

For a large number of the indicators, relevant data is available in the form requested by UNCHS. However, in many cases, interpretations or adjustments are needed. For instance, some indicators are not relevant to Canada, or available data covers a different period than requested by UNCHS. A full explanation of these data issues is provided in the *Technical Reports* and associated appendices.

This Report

The main body of this report is divided into seven sections: an introductory overview, and six thematic chapters as requested by the UNCHS:

- Overview: The Canadian Approach
- Chapter 1: Shelter
- Chapter 2: Social Development and Eradication of Poverty
- Chapter 3: Environmental Management
- Chapter 4: Economic Development
- Chapter 5: Governance
- Chapter 6: International Cooperation.

Within each chapter, five subsections provide the following information:

- The first subsection addresses the identified *indicators* for the topic of the chapter

- The second and third subsections provide an overview of key *federal and provincial government initiatives* relevant to the topic of the chapter. The information contained in these subsections was obtained via surveys of federal and provincial agencies.[2]

- The fourth subsection summarizes selected *municipal/local best practices* relating to the topic of the chapter. The examples presented have all been independently evaluated as best practices through the mechanism of the UNCHS Best Practices Program and Database.

- The final subsection is a synthesis of *stakeholder views* on the topic of the chapter, derived from a series of interviews and reflecting a diversity of viewpoints on a number of key issues.

The Quebec Report

The Quebec Report was prepared by the Government of Quebec. It reviews the implementation of the Habitat Agenda in Quebec from the provincial perspective, and may be found in the Annex.

---

[2] Additional material on Quebec is provided in the Annex to this *Country Report*.

OVERVIEW: THE CANADIAN APPROACH

INTRODUCTION

Population, Settlements, and Housing

Canada is a vast nation extending over 13 million square kilometres. With over 30 million inhabitants, the country has the lowest population density in the world. However, most of Canada's population is concentrated within 100 kilometres of the Canada-United States border, and within that area population densities are high.

During the last century, Canada shifted from a largely rural to a highly urbanized society. According to the 1996 census, over 75% of the population lives in urban areas, and just over half live in the ten largest urban areas. The shift to the cities is continuing, with the urban population growing more rapidly than Canada's population as a whole.

Housing is a major component of the built environment, and has a direct impact on quality of life and sustainability of human settlements. Based on the 1996 census, Canada has nearly 11 million occupied dwelling units, of which 57% are single detached units. Most of this housing is privately owned, with about 65% of Canadians owning the homes they occupy. Although there is significant regional variation, most housing in Canada is relatively new, with 85% built since the Second World War.

Governance

Canada is a democratic federation made up of ten provinces and three northern territories. The country has a complex system of power sharing between three primary levels of government – federal (national), provincial/territorial, and local or municipal. All three levels of government have some degree of responsibility for environmental, financial, social and economic issues associated with housing and human settlements.

For example, the federal government has taxation and monetary powers; plays an important role in coordinating national standards related to housing and settlement activity; and is involved in income support and other aspects of social development. Provincial and territorial governments are responsible for management of most of the resources within their boundaries, and they play a significant role in the provision of shelter and development of human settlements.

Municipal governments are established by, and are under the jurisdiction of, the provinces and territories. Municipalities have significant responsibilities relating to zoning, land and housing development, transportation, land use, and local infrastructure. In some larger metropolitan areas, two tiers of municipal government have been established (regional and local).

The Canadian government has recognized the inherent right of the Aboriginal peoples of Canada to self-government. Negotiations are in progress to implement self-government arrangements, and treaty discussions and land claim settlement processes are continuing for various Aboriginal groups.

In addition, Canada has a strong tradition of organized action by groups and individuals. As is discussed further below, civil society organizations play a role in all aspects of Canadian life, including housing and human settlements.

ACHIEVEMENTS

Strong Canadian Values

Canadians as a whole share a number of basic values that play a large part in defining their society, establishing its priorities, and determining how it will react to social and economic challenges.

Canadians are generally strongly supportive of Canada's social programs, including publicly-funded universal health care and a "social safety net" for those who encounter serious difficulties. Canadians believe in a balanced approach to fiscal, economic, and social priorities.

Canadians also want to be involved and consulted in the decisions that affect their lives and communities. They are concerned about individual rights and well-being; believe in equality between men and women; and have a pluralist outlook, accepting and celebrating the diversity of people and cultures.

These basic values guide Canada's response to the issues identified in the Habitat Agenda.

High Levels of Economic and Human Development

The Canadian standard of living is among the highest in the world, as measured by gross domestic product per capita. The economy continues its longest period of economic expansion since the 1960s. Inflation and interest rates are low and stable. More than 2 million new jobs have been created since 1993. The federal and many provincial governments have reduced and eliminated annual budget deficits.

Canada's strong economy is complemented by a long history of achievement in such areas as health care, education, and social welfare. As a result, Canada has in recent years consistently ranked first among all countries in the world as measured by the UN Human Development Index (which considers such factors as life expectancy, employment, education, and economic performance).

Canada's economic and social achievements provide a strong foundation for progress in housing and human settlements.

Quality Housing

Canada is among the best housed nations in the world. The vast majority of Canadians live in comfortable accommodation that contributes to their quality of life. Nearly all housing has basic services such as plumbing and electricity. While some Canadians experience housing need (discussed below), most Canadians have access to a dwelling unit that is adequate in condition, suitable in size, and affordable.

Canada's housing is mainly built by the private sector. Governments provide significant support through various mechanisms, including market instruments such as mortgage insurance; research and information transfer; and direct assistance in such areas as social housing. In total, it is estimated that governments in Canada spend close to C$9 billion annually on housing assistance ($3.5 billion for federal and provincial housing programs, $5 billion for the shelter component of social assistance, and additional support for specialized programs).

Livable Cities

Although Canadian cities are increasingly experiencing challenges resulting from urban growth, most nonetheless offer a high quality of life, including excellent services and attractive living environments. By international standards Canada's cities are generally considered to be clean, safe, and livable, and they contribute enormously to Canada's cultural, social, and economic vitality.

Governments and civil society have both played an important role in the development of Canada's human settlements. At the local level, there is a strong tradition of responsible land use planning, coupled with ongoing development and maintenance of basic services. Governments have supported this effort with programs such as the recent federal-provincial-municipal commitment of more than C$6 billion over six years for municipal infrastructure, with particular emphasis on infrastructure that preserves or enhances the quality of the environment.

Other federal and provincial programs include initiatives to improve urban air quality, and initiatives to revitalize neighbourhoods in major urban centres (such as the recently announced joint city, federal, and provincial initiative to revitalize Toronto's waterfront). With partners, the government will also initiate new and balanced measures to help address crime, building on a well-established trend of falling crime rates in Canada.

Strong Institutions, Active Civil Society Organizations, and Partnership-Based Approaches

Canada has strong and established institutions at all levels of government. The country also has strong civil society organizations, including non-governmental organizations (NGOs), academic institutions, and the private sector. Independently, agencies and organizations in these sectors are making a contribution to Habitat-related issues.

Just as importantly, Canada has a very strong tradition of partnerships between diverse organizations and sectors. Partnerships among governments at all levels, and between governments and civil society organizations, are an essential feature of Canada's approach to complex issues, and will be key to continuing progress with respect to Habitat issues. The information provided throughout this report shows the diversity of organizations working on many of the most challenging issues, and the central role partnerships play in such cases.

By way of example, the National Child Benefit is a federal/provincial/territorial initiative providing income support and services for low-income families with children. Other illustrative social development initiatives implemented through partnerships include a policy framework to promote equity and inclusion of people with disabilities; support for human resource development in

Aboriginal communities; and labour market development agreements between the federal government and the provinces/territories.

CHALLENGES

Economic and Fiscal Challenges

During the early to mid-1990s, the period covered by the indicators in the main body of this report, Canada and many developed economies experienced an economic downturn. As a result, some indicators show unfavourable trends. For instance, between 1991 and 1996, the number of households with core housing needs increased, and unemployment was relatively high throughout the period. Moreover, during this period most governments had substantial budget deficits, limiting their long-term ability to invest in social and economic priorities.

Since that time, Canada's economy has gradually re-bounded, and many governments have reduced or eliminated their deficits and significantly improved their fiscal situations. Although data is not yet available, it is believed that the number of households in core housing need has declined, and unemployment has fallen below 7%. While accumulated debt remains a challenge, overall Canada has responded successfully to the economic and fiscal situation, and is now in a stronger position to invest in initiatives that improve Canadian quality of life.

Housing Challenges

Although most Canadians are well-housed, Canada nonetheless faces challenges in this area. Based on Canadian definitions, in 1996 some 1.7 million households were considered to be in core housing need. Although adequacy and suitability of the dwelling are considered in determining need, the major factor in Canada is affordability. Over 90% of the households in core housing need had an affordability problem, meaning they had to spend 30% or more of household income on housing.

Social housing is an important part of the Canadian response to such needs. An estimated 640,000 units of social housing are provided in Canada by various levels of government, supported in part by federal funding of C$1.9 billion annually. In the 1990s, however, additional investment in new social housing was limited by the economic and fiscal situation of governments.

Some groups in society experience more severe housing problems. Aboriginal housing is a particular cause for concern, with 32% of non-farm, non-reserve households in core housing need. On reserves, only half of all households meet or exceed standards for suitability and adequacy. Similarly, because women are more likely than men to fall into the low-income category, they are more likely to face problems finding affordable housing. Canadian responses to these challenges are outlined in this report, and include both housing-specific initiatives, and efforts to address the underlying social causes.

Homelessness has become a growing concern in Canadian society. While reliable national statistics are not available, in many urban areas homelessness and the contributing social problems are becoming increasingly visible. Given the complexity of the homelessness situation, no one level of government can address the issue alone. In late 1999, the Government of Canada announced the

Homelessness Initiative, which seeks to reduce and prevent homelessness, working in partnership with other levels of government, and the private and voluntary sectors.

Urban Challenges

Canada's urban areas are facing many challenges. With growth and redevelopment, effective land use planning is both essential and difficult. A particular issue in many cities is transportation planning: how to manage demand for transportation services, and to meet needs in a manner that is efficient, affordable, environmentally sound, and protective of neighbourhoods.

A related challenge is the need to maintain and extend other basic infrastructure. In many parts of Canada, cities have in recent years assumed a greater role in this area. There is a need for significant financial resources to respond to infrastructure and related challenges.

Another challenge is the need to protect and restore the environment in and around cities. For instance, many cities continue to exceed air quality guidelines for ozone and particulate matter on a number of days each year. Similarly, it is important that Canada move towards more sustainable use of resources, through changes in consumption patterns and improved services such as recycling.

Finally, local economic development is a priority. In a changing world economy, the need for municipalities to support a sound and evolving economic base is clear.

PRIORITIES AND FUTURE DIRECTIONS

Each of the challenges described above is important, and other significant issues are identified in the main body of this report (for instance, see the sections of the report outlining stakeholder perspectives). In all of these areas, Canada is working to address the challenges through a variety of new and strengthened initiatives by all levels of government, the private sector, and other organizations.

Canada remains committed to helping ensure that Canadians have access to ***housing*** that meets their needs, primarily through the private market. Canada is also committed to responding to the needs of individuals with distinct needs, including Aboriginal people, the homeless, victims of domestic violence, persons with disabilities, seniors, and youth-at-risk.

Canada is committed to ***sustainable human settlements***, taking full account of the social, economic, and environmental aspects of our communities. Key social and economic priorities include meeting the needs of disadvantaged groups, promoting gender equality, and ensuring prosperity and improved quality of life through strong local economies. Key environmental priorities include efforts to encourage sustainable community planning, conserve resources, reduce emissions, protect water quality, and protect human health through sound community and housing practices.

Other priorities of governments in Canada complement the themes discussed above. For instance:

- ***The economy and fiscal policy***: Maintaining a strong economy, and continuing to improve the fiscal environment, are priorities for Canada's federal and provincial/territorial governments. In support of these objectives, new initiatives have been launched (see below), and in many jurisdictions significant tax and debt reductions are planned.

- ***Innovation*:** Canada's objective is to become one of the most innovative countries in the world. New initiatives are being launched to strengthen research capacity, and accelerate commercialization of innovations in such areas as health, water quality, and environment.

- ***Communication technology*:** Canada is committed to strengthening our information infrastructure, through expanded broadband internet services; more on-line government services; and improved community access in rural, remote, northern, and Aboriginal communities.

- ***Skills, learning, and education*:** Canada recognizes that success in the new knowledge economy depends fundamentally on human talent. All levels of government and their partners are committed to equipping Canadians to realize their full potential, through a range of measures in support of lifelong learning and skills development.

- ***Health and health care*:** Health and health care is a priority area for Canadians. Federal and provincial/territorial governments have recently reached a new health agreement providing increased federal funding, and some provinces have announced increased spending.

- ***Children and families*:** Canada will continue to take action to help disadvantaged families with children break the cycle of poverty and dependency and to ensure that all children are equipped with the support and capacities they need to grow into healthy, productive adults.

Internationally, Canada will continue to help address urban and settlement issues in developing countries and countries in transition. With the launch of CIDA's *Social Development Priorities*, Canada will be concentrating greater effort on health and nutrition, basic education, HIV/AIDS, and child protection. Other priority areas include basic human needs, gender equality, the environment, human rights and governance, private sector development, and infrastructure services.

To achieve these commitments, partnerships between governments, the private sector, and non-profit organizations are essential. The engagement of the broader community fosters community capacity and helps ensure the sustainability of programs. This partnership-based approach is both a key lesson from past activity, and a foundation for Canada's future Habitat-related activities.

In summary, Canada remains committed to the goals and principles of the Istanbul Declaration and the Habitat Agenda. We will continue to work domestically and with other countries to help address the national and global challenges of human settlements. The balance of this report provides details on what Canada has achieved to date, and describes many of the initiatives that will sustain and enhance our national efforts in this area.

CHAPTER 1. SHELTER

1.1 INDICATORS

This subsection presents data for a series of shelter related priorities, as specified in the UNCHS reporting format.

Priority 1. Security of Tenure

Most Canadians have security of tenure. Table 1-1 indicates that almost 65% of Canadian households own their own homes, either outright or with a mortgage.

Table 1-1: Tenure 1991 and 1996 (and 1998 for Canada)

Tenure Type	Vancouver		Calgary		Toronto		Montreal		Halifax		Canada		
	1991	1996	1991	1996	1991	1996	1991	1996	1991	1996	1991	1996	1998
Owned without mortgage	27.8%	26.7%	22.5%	24.5%	27.4%	26.3%	18.6%	19.4%	22.4%	23.3%	30.1%	29.6%	30.4%
Owned with mortgage	29.6%	32.6%	38.0%	40.9%	30.5%	32.1%	28.0%	29.0%	35.5%	36.6%	32.0%	33.6%	34.3%
Rent	42.6%	40.7%	39.5%	34.6%	42.1%	41.6%	53.4%	51.6%	42.0%	40.1%	37.9%	36.8%	35.3%
Total	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%

With regard to eviction, renters in all provinces are protected from eviction without cause. Provincial legislation sets out the circumstances under which tenancy may be terminated. These include, for instance, undue damage to the premises; conduct of illegal acts or business; interference with the reasonable enjoyment of the premises by other tenants; contravention of health and safety standards; failure to pay rent; and situations where the unit is required for occupancy by the landlord, or his or her family. Although less common in Canada, in the event of default on mortgage payments, homeowners can also lose their home as a result of legal action by the mortgage holder.

Priority 2. Right to Adequate Housing

Canadians are afforded **protection against discrimination** in matters associated with housing. The Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms prohibits discrimination in a number of areas. More explicit protection against prejudicial treatment in relation to housing is found in provincial human rights codes, which prohibit discrimination on such grounds as race, sex, marital status and receipt of public assistance. Provincial human rights commissions, along with community-based advocacy organizations, provide formal mechanisms and assist victims of discrimination in pursuing recourse.

There are no legal or institutional impediments to **home ownership** in Canada, and as noted previously nearly 65% of households own their home. There can, however, be socio-economic impediments to home ownership. For women, home ownership is more closely related to family status than is the case for men. In 1997, 78% of women in two-spouse families lived in an owner-occupied home, whereas only 49% of unattached female seniors, 34% of unattached women aged 15-64, and 29% of female single parents owned their homes. In contrast, unattached men and male single parents were more likely to own their homes, with the greatest differences occurring between male and female single parents (52% home ownership for men, compared to 29% for women).

Table 1-2 depicts housing affordability characteristics at the city level. The table shows that house values[3] have been rising in Vancouver, Calgary, and Halifax, possibly making home ownership more difficult for renters. On the other hand, during this period median house values declined in some markets, increasing affordability for some potential buyers. To facilitate home ownership, mortgage insurance is available for buyers with a low down payment. In addition, mortgage insurance is also available for multi-residential properties. This helps landlords and developers to access low-cost financing, which helps ensure a supply of rental housing.

Table 1-2: House Value, Rent and Income 1991 and 1996

House Value, Rent, and Income	Vancouver		Calgary		Toronto		Montreal		Halifax	
	1991	1996	1991	1996	1991	1996	1991	1996	1991	1996
Median house value	$200,559	$275,813	$129,707	$134,967	$249,972	$200,436	$120,291	$110,025	$95,143	$100,305
Average annual rent	$7,980	$9,060	$7,068	$7,224	$8,436	$9,096	$6,168	$6,504	$6,852	$7,188
Median annual household income of owners	$54,529	$56,915	$56,944	$59,021	$63,801	$64,916	$52,361	$53,990	$52,411	$54,690
Median annual household income of renters	$28,372	$28,957	$27,943	$27,469	$33,316	$30,277	$24,200	$22,312	$27,885	$24,893

Notwithstanding the rights and protections afforded by Canadian law and custom, **affordable housing** and **homelessness** are important concerns in Canada. Low income Canadians in particular can have difficulty finding affordable housing, and may be at risk of becoming homeless.

The first half of the 1990s was a time of both rent increases and declining household incomes for renters. As per Table 1-2, between 1991 and 1996 average annual rent increased in the five selected urban centres (ranging from 2.2% in Calgary to 12% in Vancouver), while the median annual household income of renters across all five cities declined by 5.5%. Based on Census figures, Canada Mortgage and Housing Corporation estimated that the proportion of tenants in core housing need (see below), and paying at least 50% of their before-tax household income on shelter costs, grew from 9.4% in 1991 to 13.4% in 1996. While recent increases in household incomes may have lowered this figure, housing costs have increased and there are rental shortages in some markets. Access to affordable housing and homelessness are growing problems in many of Canada's major urban centres.

Affordable housing is an issue for women in particular. For example, out of all Canadian home renters in 1996, 60% of those families headed by female lone parents were considered to have housing affordability problems, compared with 40% of those headed by male lone parents[4]. Similarly, among single women (non-family) home renters in 1996, 62% of seniors and 52% of those aged 15-64 had housing affordability problems.

---

[3] Value = expected selling price by the owner (Statistics Canada).

With respect to homelessness, it is important to recognize the complex and multidimensional nature of the problem, which includes not only a lack of affordable housing or inadequate income, but also such interrelated social factors as mental illness, substance abuse, and domestic violence. In addition, there are a variety of sub-populations of homeless people, such as youth, families with children, Aboriginal people, immigrants, refugees, and people suffering from mental illness or substance abuse. Also, the issues faced by homeless men and women can differ. For instance, homeless women are more likely to have children with them. Homeless women are also more likely to rely on family and friends for shelter rather than public shelters (possibly because of concerns about harassment and loss of custody of children).

Data on **core housing need** is a useful complement to the information presented above. Most Canadians have housing that is *adequate* in condition, *suitable* in size, and *affordable*. A household is said to be in core housing need if it falls below a defined standard in any one of these areas, and if the occupants would have to spend more than 30% of their income to find alternative housing that meets these standards in the local market.

In 1996, some 1.7 million Canadian households (18% of the total) were in core housing need. Affordability is the main contributing factor – indeed, over 90% of the affected households have an affordability problem. The level of core housing need in 1996 was greater than in 1991 (1.2 million households), due primarily to economic conditions in the mid 1990s. Since then, a number of economic factors have improved, and it is expected that core housing need has declined.

Priority 3. Equal Access to Land

There are no legal or institutional impediments to any person or group owning land in Canada. Affordability is influenced by the cost of land relative to household incomes. Table 1-3 provides a general idea of the relative land values for highly developed tracts of land (connected to municipal water services and roads and ready for new housing development). This data may be compared to the median household incomes presented previously in Table 1-2.

Table 1-3: Estimated Land Value for a Residential Lot (30 feet frontage) 1997

	Vancouver	Calgary	Toronto	Montreal	Halifax
	1997	1997	1997	1997	1997
Land Value	$87,500	$33,000	$72,000	$19,250	$27,000

---

[4] Based on payment of more than 30% of total household income on shelter.

Priority 4. Equal Access to Credit

The vast majority of loans taken out for homes in Canada are mortgage loans. There are no impediments to getting a mortgage based on race, religion, or gender. Steps have also been taken to promote access to financing for all Canadians. Based on a borrowers ability to pay, public and private mortgage loan insurance enables buyers to purchase a home with as little as 5% down payment. Mortgage approvals reached $78.7 billion in 1999, up 9.8% from 1998.

Access to financing may be constrained for a person with low income, or without formal employment or a previous credit rating (for example, a stay-at-home parent who has never been employed outside the home). These factors may cause inequitable access to credit for women relative to men, since women are more likely to have low income, and are more often the stay-at-home primary care-giver for children. Other low income groups may also experience reduced access to financing based on income-related criteria.

Priority 5. Access to Basic Services

There is virtually universal access to basic infrastructure services in urban centres in Canada. Access to drinking water for Canadian households is approximately 100% in all areas of the country; both urban and rural. Household electrical-grid connections are also nearly universal.

Table 1-4 presents data on in-house piped water connections, municipal sewerage connections, and telephone connections. The data is representative for the vast majority of Canadian households, but does not reflect those predominantly rural households that rely on private wells and septic systems. Note that the apparent decline in connections to municipal sewerage for Halifax and Toronto is the result of municipal amalgamations, which have involved adjacent rural areas where septic systems are prevalent. The 1998 data should not be taken to represent a decline in municipal infrastructure.

Table 1-4: Household Connections 1993 and 1998

Service	Vancouver		Calgary		Toronto		Montreal		Halifax		Canada	
Connection	1993	1998	1993	1998	1993	1998	1993	1998	1993	1998	1993	1998
Water (1993/1997)	100.00%	100.00%	100.00%	100.00%	100.00%	99.90%	99.98%	99.84%	100.00%	100.00%	99.86%	99.90%
Municipal Sewerage (1994/1999)	100.00%	100.00%	100.00%	100.00%	100.00%	99.00%	100.00%	100.00%	100.00%	68.00%	88.00%	89.00%
Telephone	99.40%	97.70%	99.60%	99.10%	99.90%	99.40%	98.80%	97.60%	99.30%	98.30%	98.90%	98.20%

1.2 FEDERAL POLICIES, LEGISLATION, AND PROGRAMS

This subsection presents information on the activities of key federal government departments and agencies in the area of shelter.

<table>
<tr><th colspan="2">Canada Mortgage and Housing Corporation (CMHC)</th></tr>
<tr><td colspan="2">CMHC is Canada's <i>national housing agency</i>, committed to housing quality, affordability, and choice for Canadians. To achieve these objectives, CMHC works in four main areas: housing finance, assisted housing, research and information transfer, and export promotion. Key CMHC initiatives relating to shelter include:</td></tr>
<tr><td>Mortgage Insurance Options</td><td>CMHC promotes housing affordability through <i>mortgage loan insurance.</i> By insuring lenders against the risk of borrower default, CMHC enables home buyers to access mortgages with down payments as little as 5%. This program also assists landlords and developers to access low-cost financing for up to 85% of property value, to help ensure a supply of affordable rental units. In addition, CMHC has made significant advances with innovative insurance products for the housing industry including underwriting systems, refinancing options, portability products, and automated approval systems. <i>Mortgage Backed Securities</i> (MBS) also help ensure housing affordability by offering an alternative source of low-cost funding for residential mortgages.</td></tr>
<tr><td>Residential Rehabilitation Assistance Program (RRAP)</td><td>RRAP provides support to low-income and disadvantaged Canadians in both rural and urban areas to <i>renovate</i> their properties to minimum health and safety standards, or to enhance accommodation accessibility. The program addresses homeowners, rental properties, rooming houses, Native Reserves, persons with disabilities, seniors, non-residential conversion, and emergency repairs. The Homelessness Strategy (see below) provides $268 million new funding for renovation and repair of housing occupied by low-income people, to bring it up to basic health and safety standards.</td></tr>
<tr><td>On-Reserve Housing</td><td>On-Reserve Non-Profit Housing Program subsidizes new and existing rental accommodation. Other Aboriginal housing support includes promotion of production of new subsidized housing units on reserves; support for innovative housing partnerships on and off reserves; and housing renovation assistance to First Nations to address health and safety deficiencies in housing, and housing modifications for the disabled.</td></tr>
<tr><td>Social Housing</td><td>Ongoing subsidy assistance is provided to social housing projects. The annual expenditure is $1.9 billion, supporting 640,000 low-income households in housing owned and managed by community based groups.</td></tr>
<tr><td>Community-Focussed Housing</td><td><i>Affordability and Choice Today</i> promotes regulatory reform at the municipal level (further details are provided in subsection 1.4). <i>Homegrown Solutions</i> fosters community-based housing solutions that address local affordable housing needs. <i>Community-University Research Alliances</i> (CURAs) will help communities link up with local universities to help address housing-related challenges. The <i>Canadian Centre for Public-Private Partnerships in Housing</i> is described in Section 4.2.</td></tr>
<tr><td>Research and Information Transfer</td><td>CMHC undertakes <i>research and information transfer</i> on social, economic, environmental and technical issues. Research priorities include: healthy housing, sustainable communities, housing affordability, distinct housing needs (i.e. seniors, disabled, Aboriginals, etc.), housing finance, best practices (building, renovation, etc.), market trends, and building performance. CMHC helps coordinate the national housing research agenda by convening bi-annual meetings of the <i>National Housing Research Committee</i>, with representation from federal, provincial, and territorial governments, and other housing stakeholders. CMHC established a <i>Working Group on Homelessness</i> in 1994 to develop research initiatives on homelessness, and document and communicate results. CMHC has also created a data collection and management system, the <i>Homeless Individuals and Families Information System</i> (HIFIS), to improve the quality of information on Canada's homeless population. This information will enable governments and other service providers to better plan, monitor and evaluate programs and services targeting this population. CMHC is currently working with HRDC to implement HIFIS in Canada's largest cities.</td></tr>
</table>

Human Resources Development Canada (HRDC)/National Secretariat on Homelessness	
In December 1999, the Government of Canada announced the investment of $753 million, over three years, to alleviate and prevent homelessness across Canada. The objectives of Canada's National Homelessness Initiative are to: facilitate community capacity development to address local needs of the homeless; foster effective partnerships and investments that contribute to addressing the immediate needs of homelessness and reduce homelessness; and increase the awareness and understanding of homelessness in Canada. The initiative includes a range of new programs and enhancements to existing programs, including the RRAP program described above under CMHC, and the initiatives presented below.	
New initiatives	*Supporting Communities Partnership Initiative* ($305 million). This initiative is designed to assist communities in working together, based on a continuum of support approach involving various orders of government and other stakeholders. It will help communities to develop community plans that identify needs and gaps, and to implement comprehensive local strategies that address the immediate and long term needs of homeless people. *Surplus Real Property for Homelessness Fund* ($10 million). This program transfers surplus federal lands to communities for homelessness initiatives. *Funding for Research, Reporting and Accountability* ($9 million): A comprehensive research agenda has been developed and is being implemented to lay the foundation for future work on understanding the root causes of homelessness, to support future policy development, and to serve as a resource for accountability and reporting related to the Government of Canada's Homelessness Initiative.
Expanding investments in existing federal programs (partial list)	*The Urban Aboriginal Strategy* ($59 million, with the Department of Indian Affairs and Northern Development). New funding will help communities address homelessness by increasing culturally appropriate services and support mechanisms. *The Youth Employment Initiatives* ($59 million). New funding is designed to help youth-at-risk, including homeless youth, acquire and develop basic and advanced skills. *The Shelter Enhancement Initiative* ($43 million, with CMHC). As part of the Government of Canada's Family Violence Initiative, funding is provided for the development and enhancement of emergency shelters and second stage housing intended to serve women, their children, and youth fleeing domestic violence.

Department of Indian Affairs and Northern Development	
On-Reserve Housing	All First Nations are eligible to prepare and implement a comprehensive community-band housing strategy. A new approach was adopted in 1996, based on First Nation control (community-based housing programs); First Nation expertise (capacity development); shared responsibility (shelter charges and ownership options); and better access to private capital (debt financing). For the First Nations that adopt this framework, existing restrictions on the use of capital subsidies provided by DIAND are eliminated. Instead, DIAND funding is used to support community-based policies and programs and the multi-year housing plan. Since 1996, housing activity has grown and housing conditions have improved: 57% of on-reserve housing was in adequate condition in March 2000 compared to 44-46% between 1990-1995.
Ministerial loan guarantee authority	Ministerial guarantees are needed because Reserve lands are owned by the Crown and as a result, housing loans made by private financial institutions on reserve cannot be secured by conventional mortgages. The loan guarantee authority has been increased from $1.2 to $1.7 billion. In addition, many financial institutions have developed programs by which qualified First Nation individuals can receive mortgage loans without the need for a Ministerial Loan Guarantee. These programs generally involve a guarantee from the First Nation.
Housing Training Fund	In order to assist with capacity development, DIAND has initiated a Housing Training Fund of $500,000 annually, funded under Gathering Strength - Canada's Aboriginal Action Plan. A priority of the fund is delivery of a training package on "Developing Effective Community Strategies for First Nations Housing".

Innovative Housing Fund	Under this program, $2 million annually is used to develop innovative housing ideas such as new building technology, alternative house designs and energy sources, financing and management techniques. Funding criteria require cost sharing with the private sector and/or First Nations organizations. To date, the program has supported 35 projects.
Infrastructure	DIAND is involved with the construction of new infrastructure (water and sewer projects) in communities where none existed, and with other urgent health and safety related water and sewage projects. A total of 27 new projects have been supported.

Other Federal Departments	
Status of Women Canada	*National transition house meeting*: Coordinated and hosted meeting of 13 provincial/territorial transition house association representatives and federal government officials to discuss issues relevant to homeless and abused women clients. *The Women's Program and Regional Operations Directorate*: Approved $545,000 in funding for 17 initiatives for homeless women; supported the World March of Women (1999-2000) advocating the right to decent housing internationally; participates in the Vancouver agreement, a five-year co-operative effort involving federal, provincial and municipal governments, focussing on community health and safety, economic and social development, and community capacity building. *Policy Research Directorate*: Projects such as Housing Policy Options for Women Living in Urban Poverty: An Action Research Project in Three Canadian Cities; Building Capacity: Enhancing Women's Economic Participation Through Housing; and Young Women and Homelessness in Canada.
Industry Canada	Industry Canada aims to build a fair, efficient and competitive marketplace. This indirectly supports the objective of equal access to shelter, and contributes to the goals of Habitat II through the important role of markets and the private sector in providing affordable housing.
Department of Finance/ Canada Customs and Revenue	*The Home Buyers' Plan* is a program that allows taxpayers to withdraw up to $20,000 from a Registered Retirement Savings Plan without a tax penalty. The funds must be used to build or buy a qualifying home. *The New Residential Rental Property Rebate*, introduced in Budget 2000, is a rebate program for new, substantially renovated, or converted residential rental accommodation. The rebate is payable landlords subject to the existing federal sales tax.

1.3 PROVINCIAL POLICIES, LEGISLATION, AND PROGRAMS

Canada's thirteen provinces and territories share responsibility for shelter with other orders of government. To indicate the range of activity, this subsection presents information on a number of representative activities by provincial and territorial governments. A more comprehensive listing is provided in *Technical Report 1: Shelter,* a background document prepared by Canada.

Province of Ontario	
The *Tenant Protection Act*	The TPA strives to protect tenants from arbitrary eviction. The TPA sets out the process which landlords must follow to obtain an eviction. In all cases tenants have the opportunity to dispute the grounds for eviction at a hearing before the Ontario Rental Housing Tribunal (ORHT). The TPA also contains strong anti-harassment rules, and protects tenants against unfair rent increases. The TPA requires landlords to maintain rental units in a state of good repair, and to comply with health, safety and maintenance-related standards.

Provincial Homelessness Strategy	In March 1999, Ontario committed itself to help deal with homelessness through the implementation of a *Provincial Homelessness Strategy,* which includes a commitment to fund 10,000 new rent supplement units; an additional $45 million in funding to develop housing spaces and supports for people with mental illness; an additional $6 million for the *Provincial Homelessness Initiatives Fund*; and other measures.
Tax initiatives	*Provincial Sales Tax (PST)*: As a stimulus to the construction of affordable multi-residential rental accommodation, the government will provide grants to builders equal to the PST paid on building materials, to a maximum of $2,000 per rental unit constructed. *Land Transfer Tax Refund:* A tax refund is available to first-time home buyers of newly constructed homes. The maximum amount of refund is $2,000.
Other initiatives	The Government has implemented a new *Development Charges Act* which restricts costs that municipalities can pass on to builders; a revised Ontario Building Code which ensures standards are cost-effective, streamlined and focussed on core objectives of health, safety and accessibility; the *Fair Municipal Finance Act,* which gives municipalities the option to tax new apartment buildings at a lower rate to encourage new construction; and the *Condominium Act* which ensures greater disclosure of information to purchasers, helps ensure the quality of condominiums by requiring an adequate reserve fund, and allows for the development of new types of condominiums (e.g., common element condominiums).

Province of Manitoba	
Winnipeg Housing and Homelessness Initiative (WHHI)	The WHHI is a new three-year, multi-million dollar partnership established by the governments of Canada, Manitoba and the City of Winnipeg to address the declining housing stock, homelessness and the revitalization of Winnipeg's older neighbourhoods. The WHHI office serves as a one-stop shop for community organizations that want information and easy access to government-funded housing and homelessness programs.
Neighbourhood Housing Assistance Program	Assistance of up to $10,000 per unit will be provided to community-based neighbourhood development/rental corporations and non-profit and co-op organizations to facilitate locally planned and developed block strategies. The initiative is targeted to the highest need neighbourhoods.
Northern Housing Strategy	This strategy is intended to address northern housing needs through consultation and research, to establish the current state of northern housing, capital requirements and possible options for change. The strategy recognizes the importance of housing as a critical component in the development of healthy, sustainable communities, with particular emphasis on a holistic approach and partnerships in northern Aboriginal communities.
Supportive Housing	Supportive housing for seniors combines personal support services and homemaking in congregate residential buildings. It serves the population of low-income seniors who are frail and/or cognitively impaired or who have disabilities. By providing them with the support and services needed, this program enables them to remain "semi-independent" within their own housing unit (as opposed to a care facility).

Province of British Columbia	
Homeowner Protection Act	The *Homeowner Protection Act* addresses problems of inconsistent quality of residential construction and a lack of recourse for buyers of defective new homes. The Act requires most home builders to be licensed and to provide strong new home warranty insurance. The Act also imposes a levy on some new homes, the proceeds of which go to fund assistance programs for owners of defective homes (primarily condominiums in coastal areas).

Homes BC	Homes BC is the provincial program for constructing new non-market housing. Components of the program include *multiservice housing* (developments that include emergency shelter space and second stage housing) and housing for *lower income urban singles* (includes the working poor, persons on income assistance, and pensioners).
Single Room Occupancy (SRO) hotel purchase and renovation	This project involved the purchase of SROs through a partnership between the province, local authorities, and CMHC. The objective was to stabilize and improve housing for low-income downtown residents, and provide enhanced delivery of social and support services. The initiative is expected to result in improvements in the quality of life for the residents, and reduce overall costs associated with delivery of health and social services.
Planning and infrastructure grant program	The Community Planning and Development Grant program helps local governments undertake programs and develop plans to manage growth. The main components of this program are the *Infrastructure Grant Program for Water and Sewer* and the *Community Planning and Development Grant Program.*
Other initiatives	*The Supportive Independent Living Program* is a supported housing program which enables persons with a severe or persistent mental illness to live independently with the assistance of outreach support services. Clients are housed in private rental units, and receive a rent subsidy that enables them to pay the market rent charged by the landlord. *The Cold/Wet Weather Strategy* is a province-wide plan to help community agencies shelter persons who are homeless during severe winter weather.

Province of Alberta	
Homelessness initiative	The Homelessness Policy Framework outlines a three-year process to address the needs of homeless people and the underlying factors contributing to homelessness. Three key strategies are: housing and support services (ensure a continuum of housing facilities and services including emergency shelters and transitional housing); local capacity development; and government coordination. All seven major communities in Alberta have completed community plans, the first step needed to disburse federal and provincial homelessness funds.
Métis settlements	Part of the funding provided to Alberta's 8 Métis Settlements, under the 1990 Alberta Métis Settlements Accord, was to establish and administer local housing programs that would address the housing shortage identified in these communities.

Province of Saskatchewan	
Low-income home-ownership programs	*Remote Housing Ownership Program:* Provides low-income households in northern communities with affordable, suitable housing. Families will provide sweat equity towards home construction. Municipalities provide serviced lots. *Rental Purchase Option Initiative:* Provides a home-ownership option for northern long-term social housing clients with adequate financial resources. *Neighbourhood Home Ownership Program:* Helps revitalize inner-city neighbourhoods and increase home ownership by low income families. Eligible participants receive an equity loan of 30% of the value of the home.
Social housing programs	*Northern Social Housing Program:* Provides low-income families in northern communities with affordable rental accommodation, with maximum rent equal to 25% of household income. Rental projects managed through existing property management structures. *Homes Now:* Targeted to low-income families living in sub-standard rental accommodation in inner-city neighbourhoods. Renovation and conversion of existing rental units to social housing. Families pay a maximum rent equal to 25% of household income. *Saskatchewan Assisted Living Services:* A community-based service for low income tenants in senior social housing who require a combination of shelter and support services to maintain their independence.

Rental Market Assistance Program	This program assists northern developers and/or non-profit organizations to construct, own and operate rental housing projects. It provides a ten-year forgivable grant equal to 75% of basic unit construction costs. There is no on-going subsidy.

Province of Newfoundland	
Supportive Housing Initiative	In February 2000, a Steering Committee comprised of government officials and chaired by Newfoundland and Labrador Housing Corporation (NLHC), began the development of long-term strategy to address supportive housing in Newfoundland. Supportive housing has been defined by the committee as safe, affordable housing that is linked to a range of community supports and employment services that are as intensive and varied as the needs of the individual or family, that allow them to live in and participate in their community. The potential target populations include individuals with psychiatric illnesses, addictions, and behavioural problems, in addition to seniors or persons with disabilities who are no longer able to live independently and would otherwise require long-term nursing care. The approach to be used to identify target populations in need of supportive housing is as follows: (1) conduct a gap analysis through a review of existing programs and services; (2) carry out a public consultation process in each region of the Province, to help identify the needs of the target populations and set priorities to address those needs; and (3) establish working groups of stakeholders in different regions of the province, to address specific issues that arise from the public consultations.
Northern Strategic Housing Initiative	The NSHI is a three-year $8 million initiative designed to address the need for improved housing in northern coastal Labrador. The program is fully funded by the Provincial Government and delivered in partnership with the Torngat Regional Housing Association. In the 2000 building season, eighteen new units were built and fifty-seven houses were repaired.
Victims of Family Violence	Under this policy initiative, priority status is granted by NLHC to clients (mostly women and children) who are fleeing an abusive relationship. Clients living at home, with family, or in an emergency shelter are eligible under this Program.. Corporation staff assist the client with the housing application process and liaise as necessary with other professionals familiar with the situation. Strict confidentiality is maintained throughout the process. Corporation staff provide follow-up services to the client after move in, to address any issues regarding security, etc.

Territory of Nunavut	
Home ownership	*Nunavut Down Payment Assistance Program*: To assist residents in acquiring a mortgage by providing a one time grant of $15,000. *Emergency Repair Program*: To provide qualifying homeowners with relief from emergency repairs by providing a grant of up to $8,000.
Social housing	*PH 2000*: Construction of social housing units to begin to meet the shelter needs of social housing clients. This is intended to be a continuing program, subject to available resources. *Modernization & Improvement Program*: Yearly modernization and improvement of the social housing stock to enhance the quality of life of social housing tenants.

1.4 MUNICIPAL/LOCAL BEST PRACTICES

Canada's local communities are actively engaged in the area of shelter. To indicate the range of activity, this subsection presents a brief summary of selected best practices at the local level in

Canada. Sources and additional information are provided in the background document prepared by Canada entitled *Technical Report 1: Shelter.*

Alternative Development Standards: Towards More Efficient Use of Land

Town/City/Municipality/Organization: Regional Municipality of Ottawa-Carleton

Description of project: In response to concerns related to the costs and amount of land devoted to residential development, the Regional Municipality of Ottawa-Carleton (now the City of Ottawa) adopted guidelines for alternative development standards to reduce the cost of housing, create more compact development, and make better use of land. The guidelines include minimum standards for local road allowances, lot sizes and utility placement. A pilot project was undertaken with a local developer to test and monitor the performance of the alternative standards against the project's objectives of reducing development costs, offering affordable and marketable housing, and providing safe, effective and cost-efficient servicing.

The alternative development standards initiative is an excellent example of adjusting residential development standards as a way of reducing housing costs, as well as reducing long-term public costs and curbing urban sprawl. The initiative has had a beneficial impact on the local housing industry and new home purchasers, as well as on municipal and provincial government policy.

Vancouver's New Downtown Waterfront Neighbourhoods

Town/City/Municipality/Organization: City of Vancouver, developers, the public, other levels of government

Description of project: Vancouver has replanned over 130 hectares of former industrial lands adjacent to the downtown area. The goal was to reintroduce public access to the waterfront and to provide almost 13,000 housing units in high amenity, high density neighbourhoods. The process of creating the new neighbourhood featured cooperative planning between city staff, the developer, the public and all levels of government.

The neighbourhood is an effective model of environmental sustainability – it provides a viable housing alternative to living in suburban single-family areas, which helps to break the pattern of auto-dependence and long commutes to work. Residents have all services within walking distance. High-density housing is inherently more energy-efficient than lower-density housing, and energy-efficient features and full provision for recycling have been incorporated into the development. In addition, the conversion of land from industrial to residential use has resulted in environmental remediation of the site. The new waterfront neighbourhood is a model of urban and social sustainability for other North American cities – a vibrant and liveable community, where diversity and pedestrian-friendly design are woven into the urban landscape.

1.5 STAKEHOLDER PERSPECTIVES

This subsection presents a synthesis of the views of selected Canadian stakeholders on shelter-related issues. Further details on these perspectives are provided in the *Technical Reports* and appendices prepared by Canada. A list of stakeholders interviewed is provided in Appendix A.

What Are the Most Important Agenda-related Issues for Canadian Stakeholders?

A related package of challenges emerged from the stakeholder interviews: low rental vacancy rates, a lack of quality affordable housing for low and moderate income Canadians, and increasing levels of homelessness. Underlying these issues are various conditions, including: population growth and the demographic trend of rural to urban migration; increasing costs of land and construction; replacement of low-end rental stock by condominium housing; declining incomes of renter households; and the current lack of investment in new affordable housing construction by the federal and most provincial governments, coupled with very modest rates of rental housing construction by the private sector. Quality of shelter was also identified as an issue by stakeholders, particularly with respect to housing occupied by social assistance recipients.

A representative of the Federation of Canadian Municipalities noted that 1.7 million Canadian households are in core housing need (1996 CMHC data). The FCM membership has called for action on affordable housing and homelessness, and endorsed proposals from the organization's National Housing Policy Options Team (NHPOT) calling for investment in new affordable housing, repair of existing affordable housing, and other strategies.

The poor quality and shortage of on-reserve housing across Canada was characterized as "acute" by one Aboriginal organization, and a number of stakeholders noted that Aboriginal people are a constituency of particular concern in relation to homelessness. A specific issue related to native women's rights regarding on-reserve shelter was also noted: in cases of divorce, women often lose their home. Notwithstanding legal prohibitions against discrimination and opportunities for recourse, one interviewee noted that native women, often with large families, do face discrimination in relation to off-reserve rental housing. One Aboriginal organization called for a national Aboriginal Housing Strategy that is "responsive, community-based and culturally sensitive."

In addition to these shelter-specific issues, some interviewees mentioned broader issues of urban design and neighbourhood revitalization. Some concerns were expressed related to the concentration of rental housing in inner cities, and an associated rise in the concentration of poverty in urban areas.

How Pro-active Have Governments Been in Furthering the Agenda?

According to many stakeholders, Canadian governments have in the past been very proactive in relation to the supply of affordable housing, and the provision of rent-geared-to-income subsidies. Ongoing funding to maintain a total of 640,000 units of social housing is provided by various levels of government.

In terms of investing in the creation of *new* affordable housing, however, many stakeholders are strongly concerned that there has been a lack of concrete action by federal and most provincial governments. They believe that responsibility has in some cases devolved almost entirely to municipalities, and are concerned that the focus at this level often tends towards short-term measures to relieve homelessness. Institutionally, the absence of a strong federal presence on housing issues, and the lack of a national housing policy and/or strategy, was felt to be a significant weakness by numerous interviewees.

Notwithstanding these concerns, several interviewees commended initiatives in some provinces and various federal partnership programs, such as RRAP, ACT and HomeGrown Solutions. The federal undertaking to address homelessness via the Secretariat on Homelessness, and the commitment of $753 million over three years, was also applauded. Current initiatives to facilitate home-ownership are also positive. More broadly, the federal government is seen to be playing a role in creating a good environment for private sector provision of housing.

What Is the Stakeholder Assessment of Progress? What Lessons Have Been Learned?

All interviewees who spoke to the issue of access to affordable housing, and the related issue of homelessness, indicated that in general there have been increased problems rather than progress in recent years. Demand has been growing, and supply has been stagnant. However, numerous interviewees indicated a cautious optimism that there is an evolving commitment on the part of governments and other key players to begin to redress the situation. There is also a sense that approaches to addressing the issues are becoming more innovative, and are better addressing the need for integration between social and economic policies.

A perspective common to many interviewees is the importance of coordination and partnerships between governments, the private sector and the non-profit sector; and the need for new approaches to meeting the housing needs of low income Canadians (e.g., dealing more directly with poverty issues, versus working primarily on the supply side).

There is general concurrence that governments must take a role in supporting the supply of rental housing for low to moderate income households. The federal role is increasingly seen in relation to stimulating conditions, creating levers, and providing strategic financial tools (beyond those that CMHC currently offers). Stakeholders also continue to see the need for a strong federal role in such areas as development of building codes, mortgage insurance, and research.

This view is accompanied by widely expressed need for local involvement in defining needs and opportunities. Stakeholders identified a need for greater recognition and nurturing of local (community) capacity to lead in the design, delivery and monitoring/evaluation of housing programs. Several Aboriginal organizations were amongst those who indicated the need for greater recognition of their capacity to deliver housing programs.

CHAPTER 2. SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT AND ERADICATION OF POVERTY

Canada's national reports for the United Nations General Assembly Special Sessions on Women (2000), Social Development (2000) and Children (2001) provide extensive descriptions of the Canadian situation and actions with respect to social development and the eradication of poverty. The current report does not attempt to reproduce those detailed analyses. Rather it offers an overview of the key indicators and initiatives most relevant to sustainable human settlements.

2.1 INDICATORS

This subsection presents data for a series of social development priorities, as specified in the UNCHS reporting format.

Priority 6. Provide Equal Opportunities for a Safe and Healthy Life

Two key priorities of a safe and healthy life, as identified by UNCHS, are infant mortality and crime rates. **Infant mortality** in Canada has historically been relatively low, but nonetheless continues to decline, as reflected in Table 2-1 (which presents number of deaths under one year of age per 1000 live births). The national rate fell below 6.0 per 1000 live births for the first time in 1996. This reflects the overall high level of health of the Canadian population, and is also linked to the quality of health services available, particularly services related to maternity, delivery and early infancy.

Table 2-1: Provincial and National Infant Mortality 1993 and 1997

	B.C.		Alberta		Ontario		Quebec		Nova Scotia		Canada	
	1993	1997	1993	1997	1993	1997	1993	1997	1993	1997	1993	1997
Rate per 1000 live births	5.7	4.7	6.7	4.8	6.2	5.5	5.7	5.6	7.1	4.4	6.3	5.5

Table 2-2 presents Statistics Canada information concerning **crime rates**. Canada is a relatively safe place to live, and both overall crime rates and national violent crime rates have been decreasing in recent years. In 1998, Canada's overall crime rate fell for the seventh year in a row, reaching the lowest level since 1979. Statistics Canada data also show that the national homicide rate has been steadily declining since the mid-1970's, and by 1998 had decreased to the lowest level in 30 years. Notwithstanding these positive trends, there are challenges with regard to crime in urban centres. For example, in 1993 65% of reported homicides occurred in Canada's 25 CMA's (larger urban centres). Recent statistics for 1999 indicate that urban residents report a total personal victimization rate more than 40% higher than that of rural dwellers.

Table 2-2: Crime Rates 1993 (or 1995) and 1998

Crime	Vancouver		Calgary		Toronto		Montreal		Halifax		Canada	
	1993	1998	1993	1998	1993	1998	1993	1998	1993	1998	1993	1998
Homicides per 100,000	3.70	2.30	1.30	2.09	1.70	1.70	3.20	1.90	2.10	3.45	2.19	1.80
Sexual Assault (1995/1998) per 1000	NAV	0.84	NAV	0.68	NAV	0.57	NAV	0.44	NAV	NAV	1.17	0.82
Robbery (1995/1998) per 1000	NAV	2.16	NAV	1.06	NAV	1.23	NAV	1.91	NAV	NAV	1.00	0.96

Regarding sexual assaults, the figures in Table 2-2 reflect only police-reported incidents. According to the Statistics Canada, up to 90% of sexual assaults are not reported to the police. Furthermore, reported incidents in the table represent sexual assault rates for adults over 18. According to Statistics Canada, the majority (63%) of sexual assaults involve victims below age 17. Women are much more likely to be victims of sexual assault than men: in 1993, 77% of victims were women, rising to 85% in 1998.

Priority 7. Promote Social Integration and Support Disadvantaged Groups

Social integration stems from a complex interplay between social and economic factors that are not easily reduced to simple indicators. The UNDP's human development and human poverty indices recognize the importance of labour market attachment, education, and income levels. Canada has made progress in each of these areas, and continues to focus on making further improvements.

Canada is in its ninth year of sustained growth. In 1998, **employment** growth was 2.9%, highest among the G7 nations. Governments' efforts to reduce their deficits and debt, create stronger trading relations, and facilitate a knowledge-based economy, have resulted in a wide range of new job opportunities across Canada. As shown in Table 2-3, national unemployment has fallen from over 11% in 1991 to around 6.8% today.

Table 2-3: Unemployment by City (1991, 1996, and 2000), and National Rate (1993, 1998, and 2000)

City	1991			1996			2000		
	Total	Male	Female	Total	Male	Female	Total	Male	Female
Vancouver	10.9%	11.8%	9.9%	8.6%	8.6%	8.5%	5.9%	NAV	NAV
Calgary	8.1%	7.8%	8.5%	6.6%	6.6%	6.6%	4.5%	NAV	NAV
Toronto	9.7%	10.7%	8.6%	9.1%	8.5%	9.8%	5.5%	NAV	NAV
Montreal	14.6%	15.0%	13.6%	11.2%	11.7%	10.7%	7.7%	NAV	NAV
Halifax	9.6%	9.7%	9.5%	8.6%	8.9%	8.2%	6.0%	NAV	NAV
Canada (1993/1998)	11.3%	12.0%	10.6%	8.3%	8.6%	7.9%	6.8%	6.9%	6.7%

Canada has also made progress in the area of **education**. As shown in Table 2-4, levels of educational attainment have risen significantly.

Table 2-4: Highest Level of Education 1990 and 1998 by Gender (Provincial and National % Graduated aged 25-54)

Province	Level	1990			1998		
		Males	Females	Total	Males	Females	Total
British Columbia	Highschool	34%	41%	38%	31%	35%	33%
	College / University	46%	42%	44%	55%	52%	54%
Alberta	Highschool	31%	37%	34%	28%	33%	30%
	College / University	48%	43%	46%	57%	55%	55%
Ontario	Highschool	29%	34%	32%	29%	32%	30%
	College / University	46%	41%	43%	54%	53%	54%
Quebec	Highschool	25%	30%	28%	22%	25%	24%
	College / University	44%	37%	51%	56%	53%	54%
Nova Scotia	Highschool	21%	25%	23%	20%	23%	22%
	College / University	47%	46%	47%	56%	58%	57%
Canada	Highschool	28%	34%	31%	27%	30%	29%
	College / University	45%	40%	43%	54%	53%	54%

Table 2-5 presents the prevalence of persons in low **income** in selected Canadian cities and nationally. As the table illustrates, the percentage of individuals in low income increased between 1989 and 1993 while Canada experienced an economic recession, but decreased nationally and in most selected cities between 1993 and 1998 due to strong economic growth and government investments. Gender, age, educational attainment, labour market attachment, and family composition are key variables in determining economic vulnerability. Although some Canadians are at greater risk than others (for example, female lone parents, persons with disabilities, Aboriginal Canadians, and recent immigrants), rates of low income have been decreasing in recent years for these groups.

Table 2-5: Prevalence of Persons with Low Income [5] [6]

	Vancouver	Calgary	Toronto	Halifax	Canada
1989	12.5%	13.2%	9.0%	13.6%	10.2%
1993	17.5%	18.9%	14.7%	13.0%	13.1%
1998	13.6%	12.9%	11.2%	14.2%	12.2%

Priority 8. Promote Gender Equality in Human Settlements Development

In Canada, indicators of human development and health show positive trends for both men and women. Both sexes have access to employment, health services, and education.

---

[5] Statistics Canada does not define an official poverty line. Instead it uses a low-income cut-off established using data from the Survey of Household Spending.

[6] Data for Montreal can be found in the report prepared by the Province of Quebec, provided as an annex to this report.

With respect to **employment**, women accounted for 46% of the employed labour force in 1999, compared to 37% in 1976. Table 2-4 (see Priority 7) shows very comparable trends in unemployment for males and females.

It is important to note, however, that there are other employment-related differences between men and women. Among employed persons, the average earnings of women are lower than those of men. Women's full-time, full-year earnings in 1997 were 73% of the earnings of men, up from 64% in the early 1980's. In addition, women are more likely to be employed in non-standard employment arrangements such as part-time, temporary, and self-employed jobs. In 1999, 41% of employed women were in such work arrangements, compared to 29% of employed men in 1999 and 35% of employed women in 1989. Women also spend more of their time on unpaid work than men (some 56% more in 1998) and less on paid work (38% less).

As shown in Table 2-6, **life expectancy** across the country is high for both sexes, reflecting a generally healthy population with access to good health services. Average life expectancy for females is consistently in the order of almost six years higher than for males.

Table 2-6: Life Expectancy Provincial Rate 1992 and 1996, National Rate 1991 and 1997

	British Columbia		Alberta		Ontario		Quebec		Nova Scotia		Canada	
Gender	1992	1996	1992	1996	1992	1996	1992	1996	1992	1996	1991	1997
Females	81.0	81.9	81.0	81.3	81.0	81.4	81.0	81.5	80.0	80.7	80.9	81.4
Males	75.0	76.1	75.0	76.0	75.0	76.1	74.0	75.2	74.0	74.9	74.6	75.8

With respect to **education**, boys and girls are required by law to be enrolled in school (or equivalent) until they are 16, and primary and secondary education is free to all. Given this, there would be no significant statistical gender differences in enrollment rates in primary and secondary school systems, so this information is not tracked in Canada. However, Statistics Canada does track actual educational attainment (highest level completed) by gender. As shown previously in Table 2-4 (above), differences between females and males are not large. It is also worth noting that the national enrollment rate for females at the college and university level has been increasing steadily, and now significantly surpasses the male enrollment rate.

The probability of being in a **low income** situation varies greatly depending on type of household. For instance, forty-nine percent of senior unattached women living alone had low-incomes in 1997, compared with 33% of males in the same category. For single persons aged 18-64 living alone or with unrelated persons, women are also more likely to have low-incomes than men (41% compared to 35%). Differences are still more pronounced among lone parents. In 1997, 56% of all families headed by lone parent mothers were low income, compared to 24% for male lone parent families. The high incidence of low income among female lone parent families has also been persistent, with the percentage of such families about the same in 1997 as it was in 1980.

It has been thirty years since the groundbreaking report of the Royal Commission on the Status of Women, and fifteen since the adoption of the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms, which formally institutionalized women's rights and women's equality within the Canadian constitution. During this time there has been significant progress in the advancement of the status of women. Despite our progress, much work remains to be done. Sizeable and persistent gender gaps remain, many issues still require attention, and new issues continue to emerge. In 2000, the Government of Canada approved the development of an Agenda for Gender Equality, a strategy that will build on the foundation of the 1995 Federal Plan for Gender Equality.

2.2 FEDERAL POLICIES, LEGISLATION, AND PROGRAMS

The Government of Canada supports inclusion and full participation in society for everyone from all backgrounds; recognition of diversity; and opportunity for all to share in our economic prosperity. Canada continues to make substantial investments to build a strong social safety net to prevent and reduce poverty. Income support, active labour market measures, universal health care, and education systems have contributed to the creation of a strong and inclusive society.

This subsection presents information on selected federal initiatives in areas related to social development and the eradication of poverty.

Human Resources Development Canada (HRDC)	
The Government of Canada is determined to help improve the quality of life enjoyed by all Canadians. It has given HRDC a mandate to reach Canadians of all ages, including those with distinct needs and those facing transitions, with initiatives that help to achieve that goal. Under the authority of the Human Resources Development Act, HRDC fulfils its mandate by administering legislation, programs and services under the Employment Insurance Act, the Canada Pension Plan, the Old Age Security Act, the Canada Labour Code and other laws. HRDC increasingly fulfils its mandate through policies and partnerships, often involving other governments and sectors. Also, by providing information on such topics as retirement income, careers, and workplace innovations, HRDC offers citizens reliable facts for more effective choices in life. The following represents a cross-section of recent initiatives in support of labour market attachment and social inclusion:	
National Children's Agenda	Along with Health Canada, HRDC has lead responsibility for the National Children's Agenda (NCA), a shared vision for Canada's children developed by federal/provincial/territorial (F/P/T) governments and Canadians. The National Child Benefit (NCB), launched in 1998, is the cornerstone of F/P/T efforts to fight child poverty, increase support for low-income families with children, and help them move from welfare to work. Also under the NCA, in September 2000 First Ministers agreed on a policy framework to guide F/P/T investments in early childhood development to support healthy pregnancies, births and infancy, parents, communities, and early childhood development, learning and care. The government has allocated $2.2 billion over five years to support that work. Together, these initiatives are providing children and their families with supports and services that will help them reach their potential and protect them from some of the negative effects of poverty.
Persons with disabilities	*In Unison: A Canadian Approach to Disability Issues*, released in 1998, is a F/P/T policy framework aimed at promoting full citizenship and inclusion of people with disabilities in all aspects of Canadian society through a focus on three key inter-related policy areas: employment, income and disability supports. Governments have since agreed to develop an accountability framework and an internet information service - Disability Links. *Employability Assistance for Persons with Disabilities* supports labour market programs and services targeted to local priorities which help individuals with disabilities prepare for, obtain and maintain employment. The *Opportunities Fund* generates innovative employment activities which help persons with disabilities who are not eligible for benefits under the Employment Insurance Act.

Aboriginal Human Resource Development Strategy (AHRDS)	AHRDS, HRDC's major contribution to *Gathering Strength - Canada's Aboriginal Action Plan,* transfers responsibility for designing and delivering labour market programs directly to Aboriginal organizations. It includes support for labour market programming, child care for First Nations and Inuit communities, urban access to programs and services, youth programming, capacity building, and Aboriginal persons with disabilities. Agreements under AHRDS focus on capacity building, good public administration, and a results-based accountability system.
Youth Employment Strategy (YES)	The YES, implemented in 1997, provides work experience, career and labour market information, and access to learning opportunities for close to 100,000 participants per year through mechanisms such as: Youth Internship Canada, which provides funds to employers for internships; Youth Service Canada, which provides funds to organizations that create community service projects for specific youth groups; Student Summer Job Action, which provides wage subsidies to employers who create student jobs; and Information Services, which give students access to labour market information.
Canadian Opportunities Strategy	The Canadian Opportunities Strategy was introduced in 1998 to expand access to the knowledge and skills Canadians need for better job opportunities and a higher standard of living. The Strategy: promotes access to post-secondary education by helping students in financial need; increases assistance for advanced research and for graduate students; helps individuals repaying student loans, especially those in financial hardship; helps Canadians upgrade skills throughout their working lives; helps families save for their children's education; encourages employers to hire young Canadians and helps young people make the transition to work; and helps bring the benefits of information technology into classrooms and communities.
Labour Market Development Agreements	Since 1996, federally initiated Labour Market Development Agreements have been agreed to with nine provinces and the three territories. This initiative involves a unique co-operation between federal and provincial/territorial governments which allows for the flexibility needed to address local labour market conditions. Based on a national framework provided by the Employment Insurance legislation, programs and services delivered through the Agreements continue to: further federal and provincial labour market objectives and priorities; result in employment and self-sufficiency for assisted clients; increase the participation in the labour market of employable persons; particularly those who are eligible for employment insurance benefits; and foster an entrepreneurial climate.

Health Canada	
First Nations and Inuit Home and Community Care	The First Nations and Inuit Home and Community Care Program aims to fill gaps in the continuum of care, and improve access to care for the elderly, disabled, chronically ill, and those requiring short-term acute care services. Service development will support care of aging people in a home and community based environment. Health Canada is working collaboratively with First Nations and Inuit on the implementation of the Program.
First Nations and Inuit Access to Health Services	*Community based public health programs*: Provides health promotion, prevention and protection; increased access to primary care; non-insured health services; and addiction centres/facilities. *Canada Prenatal Nutrition Program for First Nations and Inuit*: Provides food subsidy, nutritional screening, education and counselling, breast feeding promotion and support to pregnant women.

Other initiatives (partial list)	The *Aboriginal Diabetes Initiative* addresses the epidemic of diabetes amongst Aboriginal people. Regionally and locally, diabetes programs are developed, implemented, and delivered in partnership with or by Aboriginal peoples. The *Aboriginal Head Start on Reserve* program is designed to give Aboriginal children living on and off reserves a nurturing pre-school environment. The program addresses culture and language, health promotion, education, nutrition, social support, and parental and family involvement. The program is implemented with DIAND, HRDC and First Nations organizations.

Department of Indian Affairs and Northern Development	
Linking social assistance to training and development	A National Policy Coordinating Group including the Assembly of First Nations, HRDC and DIAND is developing a framework for welfare reforms. Regional agreements on developing social welfare reforms have been signed with groups in some regions. A total of 86 First Nations are participating in seven welfare demonstration projects to implement reforms that will build capacity and link welfare with training, healing and employment opportunities.
Training and education	The *Aboriginal Human Resources Development Strategy* is described above (see HRDC). With respect to *education*, DIAND and the Assembly of First Nations are supporting 38 education reform projects. In another initiative designed to increase access to post-secondary education in the North, DIAND contributed to the establishment of a University of the Arctic. This "university without walls" uses modern computer-based technology to link Arctic educational institutions and enhance Arctic community access to educational programs.
Women and children	*National and regional committees* with links to HRDC and DIAND have been established to oversee the implementation of women's and children's programs. In 1999-2000, a total of 202 projects were funded, which included 47 needs assessments/developmental projects and 156 operational projects. *A Special Representative* has been appointed to make recommendations on the rights of First Nations women. Registered Indian women living on reserve may be negatively affected by the *Indian Act* in relation to the division marital property upon dissolution of a marriage. The Department of Canadian Heritage's *Aboriginal Women's Program* has provided funding to support the participation of Aboriginal women in the design and advancement of self-government, and their participation in self-government processes.
Improving prospects for urban Aboriginal youth	Canadian Heritage is supporting the development of a network of urban multipurpose Aboriginal youth centres to improve the economic, social and personal prospects of urban Aboriginal youth. A budget of $100 million will be available until March 31, 2003. Aboriginal organizations determine which Aboriginal youth programs they want to deliver, based on the employment needs of youth in their communities. Under Canada's Youth Employment Strategy, a total of $25 million per year of youth funding has been ear-marked for helping Aboriginal youth.

Other Federal Departments	
Status of Women Canada (SWC)	*The Federal Plan for Gender Equality* is a collaborative initiative of 24 federal departments and agencies led by SWC, committing Canada to implement gender-based analysis (GBA) in the development of policies, programs, and legislation. SWC will assist other federal departments and agencies to set up processes to ensure GBA is incorporated into policy and program development. SWC is also developing analytical tools and training materials on GBA, and promoting a common understanding of GBA concepts and best practices.

Industry Canada	Industry Canada takes a lead role in promoting access to the information highway, which can enable economic and social growth in cities, small towns and rural areas. In March 1999 Canada became the first country in the world to connect all of its schools and public libraries to the Internet. By March 2001, the *Community Access Program* will have established 10,000 rural and urban access sites across Canada. The *Smart Communities Program* is now supporting demonstration projects in 12 communities, which will become centres of expertise in the integration of information and communication technologies.
CMHC	*Aboriginal Capacity Building*: CMHC supports Aboriginal communities through activities designed to develop more specialized skills related to housing. Examples include provision of training in areas such as property management, arrears management and indoor air quality; the Native Inspection Services Initiative; and Housing Internships.
Citizenship and Immigration Canada (CIC)	*The Metropolis Project:* Launched in 1996, the Metropolis Project is a national and international forum for research and policy development on population migration, cultural diversity, and the challenges of immigrant integration in cities in Canada and around the world. The goal is to improve policies for managing migration and diversity in major cities. In Canada, the project is supported by a consortium of federal departments and agencies, and is built upon partnerships between governments, researchers, and community organizations in four Centres of Excellence. Internationally, the project involves partners from over 20 countries. Key activities to date include research projects, national and international conferences, and comparative research projects on transnational communities and other aspects of immigrant integration in cities.

2.3 PROVINCIAL POLICIES, LEGISLATION, AND PROGRAMS

Canada's thirteen provinces and territories have direct responsibility for many aspects of social development. To indicate the range of activity, this subsection presents information on a number of representative activities by provincial and territorial governments. A more comprehensive listing is provided in *Technical Report 2: Social Development and Eradication of Poverty,* a background document prepared by Canada.

Province of Ontario	
Child Care Supplement	The Ontario Child Care Supplement For Working Families assists low and middle income working families by providing a tax-free monthly child care supplement to eligible families with children under age seven. It is estimated that for the 2000-2001 fiscal year payments of $215 million will be made to 222,000 families.
Ontario Women's Directorate initiatives	The Ontario Women's Directorate is responsible for, or participates in, numerous initiatives, including: *Women in Skilled Trades,* a pre-apprenticeship training program designed to provide women with the opportunity to work in growth industries; *Partners for Change,* which develops projects to improve women's economic independence and provide young women with information on a full range of career opportunities; *Information Technology Training for Women,* a community based, information technology certification/training program; *Investing in Women's Futures,* which provides funding to non-profit community based agencies that deliver programs and services to women; and other programs dealing with such issues as women's economic independence and women's safety.
Persons with disabilities	Ontario has revised the standards in the 1997 Ontario Building Code to make buildings more accessible to people with disabilities. In addition, in 1998 the Government announced an $800,000 Disability Partnership Incentive Fund. This Fund supports community and strategic leadership projects, which help improve access for persons with disabilities.

Equal Opportunity Plan	This initiative supports employer and employee efforts to create fair workplaces, promote employment practices based on an individual's merit, and identify and remove barriers at work that prevent people from making the best use of their abilities. The Ministry of Citizenship, Culture and Recreation provides access to information, resources and best practices. Support also includes funding for projects that advance equal opportunity in employment.
Ontario Human Rights Commission	The Ontario Human Rights Commission has in recent years addressed issues relating to age discrimination; gender identity; inappropriate gender-related comments; pregnancy; sexual orientation; sexual harassment; HIV/AIDS; language; persons with disabilities; creed and religious observances; racial slurs and jokes; transit accessibility; policy on employment-related medical information; teaching human rights in Ontario; and more.

Province of New Brunswick	
Social policy reform	In 1998, New Brunswick created a Special Cabinet Committee on Social Policy Renewal, and initiated a process involving elected representatives, senior officials, three Roundtables, 25 Community Dialogues (involving 3,000 participants), a 1-800 number, workbook, and web-site. The government is now reviewing proposals for reform in such areas as civic engagement, prevention vs. treatment, accountability, families, life-long learning, service delivery, and integrated social and economic policies.
Other initiatives (partial list)	*New Brunswick Child Tax Benefit and Working Income Supplement*: This initiative provides a monthly, tax-free payment to low income families with children under age 18. *Disability Supplement*: Deaf, blind and disabled clients who qualify for assistance under the Extended Benefits Program will receive an annual disability supplement. *Healthy Minds Initiative*: This initiative helps address the nutritional needs of low-income students from kindergarten to grade 3. Results include fewer hungry children and positive learning outcomes.

Province of Manitoba	
Employment and income assistance	As a means of investing in children, greater resources have been committed to families in Manitoba in 2000-2001, increasing the Employment and Income Assistance (EIA) and Municipal Assistance basic benefit for children aged six years and under. The Building Independence program will also offer opportunities to EIA participants who are looking for work and want to participate meaningfully in their communities.
Children	*Healthy Child Manitoba* will facilitate a community development approach for the well-being of Manitoba's children, families and communities, with a priority focus on conception through infancy and the preschool years. Manitoba will expand it's supports to families and their children using prenatal and postnatal nutrition, fetal alcohol syndrome prevention and support programs, nurses-in-schools, parent-child centres, and teen pregnancy prevention programs. *Child Day Care Program*: Funding has been increased for day care, which serves to ensure affordable, accessible, quality child care for Manitoba's children.
Community development	*Neighbourhoods Alive!* is a long-term, community-based, social and economic development strategy. It supports and encourages community-driven revitalization efforts relating to jobs, education and training, housing and safety, community infrastructure, and recreation initiatives for families in specific neighbourhoods in the cities of Winnipeg, Brandon and Thompson. *The Winnipeg Development Agreement* is a five-year, $75 million commitment by the governments of Canada, Manitoba and Winnipeg to the long-term sustainable economic development of Winnipeg. The initiative focuses on labour force development, strategic and sectoral investments, and the development and safety of Winnipeg communities.

Province of British Columbia	
BC Family Bonus	Introduced in 1996, the BC Family Bonus provides a tax-free payment for all low- and modest-income families. In July 1998, it was combined with federal funding as part of the National Child Benefit. The BC Family Bonus reduced the poverty gap by an estimated 19 % for all working poor families and by about 25% for single parent families among the working poor. Many parents on social assistance are returning to the labour market, resulting in a drop of 34% over four years in children receiving welfare.
Children's programs	*Child Care BC* is a comprehensive program to provide all families access to quality child care at an affordable rate of $14 for full-day care. The number of licensed child care spaces is expected to grow by 20 % to a total of 85,000 by 2004. *The Healthy Kids* program provides basic dental and optical services up to $700 per year per child for children in social assistance and low income families. In 2000, 145,000 children were eligible for benefits.
Transition support for women	*Transition Homes* are a crisis intervention service providing safe shelter and support for abused women and their children who must leave violent relationships. In BC, there are 62 transition houses providing 647 beds for women in crisis. In rural areas where population does not warrant a fully staffed transition house, *Safe Homes* provide safe, secure temporary housing in private homes, hotel units or rental apartments. Eight *Second Stage* houses serve women who need time beyond their stay at a transition house to make long-term plans for independent living. *Bridging Employability Program* is available to women who are leaving abusive relationships, and offers support in accessing education, training and employment.
Other women's programs	*Women's Workplace Equity Office*: Ministry of Women's Equality is establishing a workplace equity office to work cooperatively with business, labour and local governments in BC to bring about changes in organizational and workplace culture to advance women's equality. *Equity hiring for major capital works projects*: The BC government has worked to increase representation of women on major construction projects funded by the province. *Women in Trades and Technology* is a national non-profit network. The Ministry of Women's Equality has supported WITT since 1995 by helping to fund education, materials and other resources.

Province of Prince Edward Island	
Family Health Benefits	The Family Health Benefits Program assists with the cost of drug coverage for low income families and provides support to working families who do not receive social assistance.
Other initiatives (partial list)	*Publicly Funded Kindergarten*: Kindergarten is now publicly funded and available to all children, province wide, at no additional cost. *Day Care Program Expansion*: Increased subsidies will result in more available spaces. *Disabilities Support Program* (under development): This program will increase and integrate delivery of supports, on an individual case basis, to persons with disabilities.

Province of Alberta	
Persons with developmental disabilities	The *Persons with Developmental Disabilities Community Governance Act* (1998) transfers responsibility for delivery of services for adults with developmental disabilities to government appointed community boards. Key features of the new governance structure are: stakeholder involvement at the local level, including persons with disabilities and their families or guardians; autonomy of decision making; and a shift in government role from delivering services to providing strategic direction.

Alberta Children's Forum	The Alberta Children's Forum provides an opportunity for ongoing consultation to better support the well-being of children. The Forum includes not-for-profit organizations, social service agencies, Aboriginal groups, youth agencies and government ministries. It provides youth with an opportunity to be heard by business, community and government. Child and family service authorities have incorporated many recommendations from the Forum.
Initiatives for children and youth	*Alberta Children and Youth Initiative:* Through integrated provincial policy and programs, this initiative enables communities and organizations to deliver effective services to meet the needs of their children and families. Related programs include: *Alberta Partnership on Fetal Alcohol Syndrome* where government and community partners work to prevent fetal alcohol syndrome and enhance capacity for care of those affected; *Protection of Children Involved in Prostitution* where government and community partners provide services for children to help end their involvement in prostitution; *Student Health Initiative* which enhances health and related services for students with special health needs; *Children's Mental Health* which outlines a comprehensive system of mental health services for children and youth; *Child Health Benefit Program* which provides medical coverage to 55,000 children of families with low income; and the *Alberta Youth Employment Strategy,* which promotes effective school and work transition, and addresses the barriers some youth face relating to school and work.

Province of Saskatchewan	
Income Security Redesign	Income Security Redesign is a major interdepartmental and intergovernmental strategy to address family and child poverty by removing income-related barriers and disincentives to employment, and by providing the necessary supports to enable low income families to move into and stay in the workforce. New program initiatives include (1) *Saskatchewan Child Benefit,* a monthly allowance to assist lower income families with the cost of raising children; (2) *Saskatchewan Employment Supplement,* a monthly supplement to earnings and child/ spousal maintenance payments for lower-income parents; (3) *Provincial Training Allowance,* a monthly allowance for students enrolled in adult education or short-term training programs; and (4) *Family Health Benefits,* supplementary health benefits to low income working families.
Education and training initiatives (partial list)	The province has adopted new strategies for all levels of education, training and employment services, distance education and technology, and Indian and Métis education. The *Multimedia Learning Strategy* supports equitable, flexible and affordable access to education and training using new media. *JobStart/Future Skills* provides work-based training and employment opportunities. The *Quick Skills Program* provides training to help address skill shortages in particular communities or industries. A new *Apprenticeship and Trade Certification Act* introduced in 1999 created an industry-led Saskatchewan Apprenticeship Commission.

Territory of Nunavut	
Child & Family Services Act	The Child and Family Services Act increases the involvement of parents/guardians in addressing protection issues of their children, and increases the involvement of the community in addressing the protection issues of children and community residents.
Community development	The Inter-departmental Wellness and Community Development Steering Committee is an ongoing initiative. The goal is to "Develop a comprehensive strategy for long-term community development through … wellness, capacity and economic plans…". The intent is to ensure government activities are consistent between departments and to encourage all Nunavut communities to develop their own plans by providing training support. All government Departments are participating in this initiative.

2.4 MUNICIPAL/LOCAL BEST PRACTICES

Canada's local communities are actively engaged in the area of social development. To indicate the range of activity, this subsection presents a brief summary of selected best practices at the local level in Canada. Sources and additional information are provided in the background document prepared by Canada entitled *Technical Report 2: Social Development and Eradication of Poverty.*

Waterloo Region Opportunities Planning

Town/City/Municipality/Organization: Community groups, Ministry of Community & Social Services

Description of project: The Waterloo Opportunities Planning (OP) program brought together a coalition of community groups and low-income residents to provide counseling on employment, self-employment and life skills in disadvantaged neighbourhoods in Waterloo Region (Ontario). Because of its synergistic mix of agency partnerships, its democratic management team that gave a strong voice to program clients, and its unique approach to career planning that helped clients overcome personal barriers, OP participants returned to work much faster than clients of government employment programs – and at much lower cost. OP 2000, the on-going program inspired by the original OP, provides a model of effective and humane welfare reform that has provided lasting benefits to its clients and the Region. The OP principles of devolved authority, empowerment of low-income people, aggressive investment in human potential, and accountability to outcomes represent a much-needed effort to re-align the relationship between state administration and the community.

Toronto Healthy City Project

Town/City/Municipality/Organization: City of Toronto

Description of project: The role of the Healthy City Office is to support the city and municipal authorities in working with businesses, other levels of government, local communities, NGOs and residents to identify and act upon serious urban problems in an integrated way. The Office seeks to address social challenges such as homelessness, poverty, pollution, and crowding which, though they lie outside the health sector per se, have a significant effect on the health of the population. The Office is strategically located outside of the Health Department in recognition that such factors are key in determining a person's health.

The initiative seeks to promote a Healthy City through various means. It provides information such as quality of life priorities and municipal performance measures. It supports and showcases co-operative and innovative approaches to issues, and helps build partnerships for specific issues (for example, the Clean Air and Green Tourism partnerships). It seeks to build community capacity to solve local problems, and facilitates citizen input into the development of new policies such as community safety, youth employment and homelessness.

Integrating Gender Perspective Into Public Transit

Town/City/Municipality/Organization: Comité d'action femmes et sécurité urbaine (CAFSU)

Description of project: The CAFSU mobilized to convince transit authorities in Montreal to establish a permanent service which allows women to get off buses between regular stops at night in order to be nearer their final destination. The request originated from the observation that, because of fear of violence, women were traveling less on public transit at night. The request for implementation of the service was thus aimed at increasing the mobility, autonomy and empowerment of women, with the ultimate objective of gender equality. In addition to addressing the safety concerns of women on public transit at night, the initiative helped to sensitize the community to the reality of women's insecurities – a major objective of the CAFSU. The success of the initiative reinforced the determination of the various CAFSU partners to continue their collaboration on the development of policies and measures increase women's' safety and sense of security.

Safer Cities Initiatives
Town/City/Municipality/Organization: Safer Cities Initiatives Office, City of Edmonton
Description of project: The Safer Cities Initiatives are based on two fundamental concepts: crime prevention through social development, and crime prevention through urban design. The initiatives flowed from a Task Force on Safer Cities in Edmonton. Most recommendations of the task force have been implemented, and are now part of the core responsibilities of various agencies and city departments. The program supports self-initiative and community participation as important aspects of crime prevention through social development. There are a wide variety of specific initiatives. The Edmonton Youth Justice Committee involves the community in a process to rehabilitate young offenders. The Spousal Violence Follow-Up Team partners a social worker with a police detective to work on family violence cases. Safewalk is a volunteer service that provides a safe alternative to walking alone at night. The Prostitution Offenders Program provides an alternative to court action and sentencing. The Neighbourhood Crime Prevention Safety Audit Guide is a simple tool that can be used to identify features in neighbourhoods that make people feel unsafe. The Edmonton Transit and Crime Prevention program involves transit in reporting suspicious activities. These and other projects have the support of the community and have helped Edmonton become a safer city.

Taxi Driver Security
Town/City/Municipality/Organization: Montreal police force, taxi companies, drivers
Description of project: To stem a rising tide of taxi robberies, the Montreal police initiated a program called "Partenaires en prévention" (partners in prevention), whereby police randomly stop and spot check taxis with people on board. On each occasion, the driver is asked to get out of the taxi and confirm that everything is in order, thus removing the driver from danger if a robbery is in progress. The program was widely advertised and resulted in a dramatic drop in the number of taxi robberies. The program also had the beneficial effect of breaking down barriers and encouraging cooperation between the police force and taxi drivers – a large proportion of whom are from ethnic communities, and who often regarded the police force with suspicion.

2.5 STAKEHOLDER PERSPECTIVES

This subsection presents a synthesis of the views of selected Canadian stakeholders on social development issues. Further details on these perspectives are provided in the *Technical Reports* and appendices prepared by Canada. A list of stakeholders interviewed is provided in Appendix A. In addition, some issues addressed previously in Subsection 1.5 are also relevant to this discussion of social development.

What Are the Most Important Agenda-related Issues for Canadian Stakeholders?

With respect to poverty, stakeholders noted a particular vulnerability among certain sectors of the population, including children, people with disabilities, Aboriginal people, and immigrants. Concerns were expressed regarding a weakening of the social safety net, set against the need to improve and expand basic programs and services to break the cycle of poverty. The importance of shelter as a focal-point for income support programs was noted, given the strong links between secure housing and physical and social well-being. On the broader social development front, key issues raised related to social integration of immigrants and safe communities. The Federation of Canadian Municipalities, for instance, has several initiatives in the area of community safety and crime prevention.

How Pro-active Have Governments Been in Furthering the Agenda?

Though stakeholders identified advances in some areas (e.g., via the federal government's Urban Aboriginal Strategy), the prevailing view expressed was that governments have not been sufficiently proactive. There was specific criticism of a lack of action to implement the recommendations of the Royal Commission on Aboriginal Peoples.

One impediment to motivation and action is said to be a widespread disbelief by Canadians that some people in Canada live in poverty. Institutionally, a concern was also expressed that a downloading of responsibility for poverty issues to municipalities – which may not have sufficient resources – may mean less concerted attention and action.

What Is the Stakeholder Assessment of Progress? What Lessons Have Been Learned?

Stakeholders are generally disappointed with Canada's progress on poverty reduction. One stakeholder noted that the gap between incomes of owner and renter households has grown steadily over recent decades, and the income of low income Canadians has declined over the last ten years in real dollar terms. Another stakeholder noted the lack of progress in relation to the unanimous vote by Parliamentarians to eradicate child poverty by the year 2000.

With respect to Aboriginal peoples, it was suggested that there is insufficient recognition by governments of the significant social, economic and cultural differences between various groups (First Nations, Inuit, Métis, non-status, and off- versus on-reserve). A trend of significant concern is the rising rate of incarceration of Aboriginal people, which according to the Native Women's Association of Canada has increased by nearly 300% since 1988. On the positive front, an increasing number of native women are accessing post-secondary education in urban centres; and more generally among native women there is a growing sense of independence and a readiness to take charge of their lives.

CHAPTER 3. ENVIRONMENTAL MANAGEMENT

3.1 INDICATORS

This subsection presents data for a series of indicators related to environmental management, as specified in the UNCHS reporting format.

Priority 9. Promote Geographically Balanced Settlement Structures

Canada's urban areas comprise only a small percentage of the country's land area, but account for over 75% of the population. Although the figures in Table 3-1 suggest a slight decline in the percentage urban population between 1991 and 1996, the long term trend has been towards greater urbanization. For example, the Canadian rural population grew 8.1% between 1980 and 1995, while urban areas experienced 21.8% growth in the same period. Based on more recent data, the population of Canada was 30,491,300 on July 1, 1999, up 0.8% from the previous year. During this same period, the population of Canada's 25 CMAs grew by 1.1%.[7]

Table 3-1: National Population 1991 and 1996

Sector	1991	1996
National Urban Population	20,906,875	22,461,000
National Total Population	27,296,860	29,671,900

This national pattern of urban growth can be seen for the individual cities presented in Table 3-2, which shows CMA growth from 1991 to 1996, and again from 1996 to 1998, for all five cities.

Table 3-2: Population 1991, 1996, and 1998 by City

Population Boundary	Vancouver			Calgary			Toronto			Montreal			Halifax		
	1991	1996	1998	1991	1996	1998	1991	1996	1998	1991	1996	1998	1991	1996	1998
Core City	471,844	514,008	NAV	710,795	768,082	NAV	635,395	653,734	NAV	1,017,669	1,016,376	NAV	114,455	113,910	NAV
Urban Agglomerate (CMA)	1,602,590	1,831,665	1,999,200	754,033	821,628	903,400	3,898,933	4,263,757	4,586,000	3,208,970	3,326,510	3,423,500	320,501	332,518	348,800

Priority 10. Manage Supply and Demand for Water in an Effective Manner

Canada is perceived as a country with abundant water resources. However, about 60% of this water flows north and is not readily available or easily accessible where it is needed most – in the south, where 90% of the population lives.

Canadians have one of the highest per capita rates of water consumption in the world. Table 3-3 provides estimates of domestic water consumption at the municipal and national levels.

---

[7] Urban agglomerations are referred to as Census Metropolitan Areas (CMAs) by Statistics Canada. CMAs comprise an urban core and adjacent urban and rural areas (fringes) that have a high degree of social and economic integration with the core.

Table 3-3: Water Consumption (Domestic)						
	Vancouver	Calgary	Toronto	Montreal	Halifax	Canada
	2000	2000	2000	1999	2000	1994
Estimated Liters per person per day	357.4	330.7	238.5	373.3	238.2	331.0

As indicated previously, there is virtually universal access to piped drinking water in urban areas in Canada, and municipal water supplies are high quality and safe to drink. However, recent serious and tragic contamination of the water supply in the rural town of Walkerton Ontario, and less severe incidents of contamination in other communities, have underlined the importance of continued effort to control sources of contamination, maintain water supply infrastructure, provide training of personnel, and ensure adequate compliance and management systems.

Priority 11. Reduce Urban Pollution

Table 3-4 provides 1993 and 1998 air pollution data for five criteria air contaminants and for lead, based on information collected by the National Air Pollution Surveillance Network. The first six rows of the table show the number of days in each city that the National Ambient Air Quality Objectives (NAAQO) were exceeded. The bottom six rows show the average annual concentrations of these substances in the air. Details on the NAAQO and on monitoring periods can be found in *Technical Report 3: Environmental Management,* a background document prepared by Canada.

Table 3-4: Urban Air Pollution 1993 and 1998										
	Vancouver		Calgary		Toronto		Montreal		Halifax	
Pollutant	1993	1998	1993	1998	1993	1998	1993	1998	1993	1998
Number of days exceeding NAAQO during a year for SO2	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Number of days exceeding NAAQO during a year for NO2	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	35	0	0
Number of days exceeding NAAQO during a year for O3	0	4	0	1	172	52	6	26	2	0
Number of days exceeding NAAQO during a year for CO	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Number of days exceeding NAAQO during a year for TSP	2	1	18	20	4	NAV	1	7	0	0
Number of days exceeding NAAQO during a year for Pb	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
Average Annual Concentration SO2 ppb	5.50	3.15	3.00	3.64	4.20	4.40	3.86	4.39	10.50	9.93
Average Annual Concentration NO2 ppb	19.92	18.92	24.67	25.87	23.00	25.92	22.60	18.27	14.50	20.51
Average Annual Concentration O3 ppb	11.93	14.67	16.00	17.23	18.67	19.97	15.38	18.64	20.50	25.01
Average Annual Concentration CO ppm	1.01	0.71	0.92	0.79	1.06	0.97	0.65	0.53	0.74	0.56
Average Annual Concentration TSP microg/m3	30.70	20.55	54.67	58.82	46.40	56.68	32.89	41.53	21.00	16.66
Average Annual Concentration Pb microg/m3	0.02	0.01	0.02	NAV	0.01	0.02	0.02	0.02	0.01	0.01

For most of the sample cities and most criteria air contaminants monitored, the NAAQO guidelines were met during 1993 and 1998. The major exception was ozone (O_3), for which most cities exceeded the guideline for average *annual* concentration (15 ppb). In addition, most of the cities experienced a number of days each year when the *daily* limits for ozone or particulate matter (TSP) were exceeded.

As shown in Table 3-5, 97% of Canada's municipal wastewater receives some form of treatment. Wastewater treatment levels vary considerably across Canada: generally, Ontario, Alberta and Saskatchewan have higher levels of wastewater treatment than the rest of the country. In fact, the majority of the population served by sewers in Ontario and the Prairie provinces received tertiary treatment. No other region in the country is close to matching this level of treatment, though both Quebec and the northern Territories have made significant improvements in recent years. In the Atlantic provinces combined, 46% of the population served with sewers received no wastewater treatment at all. Nationally, there has been a steady growth in level of wastewater treatment: in 1991 37% of the population with sewers received tertiary treatment, and in 1996 this number reached 41%.

Table 3-5: City WasteWater Treated 1994 and 1999

	Vancouver		Calgary		Toronto		Montreal		Halifax		Canada	
	1994	1999	1994	1999	1994	1999	1994	1999	1994	1999	1994	1999
% of Wastewater Collected Undergoing Treatment (all levels)	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	0.0%	33.0%	93.0%	97.0%

Solid waste management in Canada is heavily regulated at the provincial level, and as such there are relatively few major problems with inadequate disposal or illegal dumping. The volume of waste generated in Canadian municipalities does, however, pose a major challenge. Table 3-6 shows significant changes in the share of waste "disposed" (mainly sanitary landfill with some incineration) versus "diverted from disposal" (mainly recycled with a small portion composted). This change reflects efforts to reduce waste at source and via diversion. Most major municipalities have implemented recycling and composting initiatives, and some (such as Halifax) have quite comprehensive and aggressive programs.

Table 3-6: Provincial Solid Waste Management 1995 and 1998

Method of Management	British Columbia		Alberta		Ontario		Quebec		Nova Scotia	
	1995	1998	1995	1998	1995	1998	1995	1998	1995	1998
% Disposed (Landfill or Incineration)	82.0%	68.5%	87.0%	83.0%	83.0%	72.0%	90.0%	62.3%	84.0%	70.0%
% Recycled	18.0%	31.5%	13.0%	17.0%	17.0%	28.0%	10.0%	37.7%	16.0%	30.0%

Priority 12. Prevent Disasters and Rebuild Settlements

In Canada, responsibility for building regulation rests with the provinces and territories. Canada's National Research Council develops model codes such as the National Building Code of Canada, the National Fire Code of Canada, and the National Farm Building Code. These codes are either adopted as minimum standards by provinces, territories, or municipalities, or are altered to suit local needs. The provincial codes are generally enforced at the municipal level.

Emergency Preparedness Canada (EPC) was developed as a national coordination agency operating within the Department of National Defence. EPC coordinates emergency preparedness between federal departments, provinces and territories, and local authorities. It is guided by the Emergency Preparedness Act, and the Federal Policy for Emergencies. EPC trains municipalities in disaster planning, since emergencies are primarily a regional/local responsibility. There is also a National Disaster Financial Assistance Arrangement available for mitigation of disasters, depending on severity.

Priority 13. Promote Effective and Environmentally Sound Transportation Systems

Travel time to one's usual place of employment is an indication of transportation system performance. Table 3-7 presents average travel time by all modes of transport in 1992; unfortunately more recent comparable data is not available.

Table 3-7: City Commute Travel Time 1992

	Vancouver	Calgary	Toronto	Montreal	Halifax
	1992	1992	1992	1992	1992
Average travel time (in minutes) to work for a one way trip	30.00	22.50	29.50	27.00	19.00

Table 3-8 presents the primary method that people used to get to work in 1996. Toronto and Montreal have the lowest rates of private car use and the highest rates of public transportation use, while Halifax has the highest rate of commuting by walking and bicycle. Unfortunately, comparable data for earlier periods is not available.

Table 3-8: City Commute Travel Mode 1996

Method of Travel	Vancouver	Calgary	Toronto	Montreal	Halifax
	1996	1996	1996	1996	1996
Private car	77.4%	80.2%	72.0%	72.2%	77.2%
Public Transit	14.3%	12.6%	22.0%	20.3%	10.9%
Bicycle or Walking	8.3%	7.3%	6.0%	7.5%	11.9%
Total	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%

Priority 14. Support Mechanisms to Prepare and Implement Local Environmental Plans and Local Agenda 21 Initiatives

Of the five sample cities, Vancouver, Calgary, and Toronto are members of the International Council for Local Environmental Initiatives (ICLEI). ICLEI seeks to engage members and their communities in evaluating local strategies and performance in areas of mutual environmental concern.

In addition, many other cities and town in Canada have undertaken local environmental planning and action. A number of interesting examples can be found in Section 3.4 of this report.

3.2 FEDERAL POLICIES, LEGISLATION, AND PROGRAMS

This subsection presents information on the activities of key federal government departments and agencies in the area of environmental management.

<table>
<tr><th colspan="2">Environment Canada</th></tr>
<tr><td colspan="2">Environment Canada's general mandate is to preserve and enhance the quality of the natural environment. To carry out this mandate, the department is responsible for a wide range of environmental legislation, policies and programs. *Technical Report 3: Environmental Management*, a background document prepared by Canada, provides details on a variety of departmental initiatives. This subsection focusses on a smaller group of activities with particular relevance for urban areas and communities.</td></tr>
<tr><td>Ecosystem Initiatives Program</td><td>The Ecosystem Initiatives Program developed to address complex environmental issues in major ecosystems of concern. It is evolving into a broader federal delivery system for sustainable development, providing environmental results with economic and social benefits. It is based on sound science, an ecosystem approach, partnerships, and a citizen/community focus. Examples include: 17 Areas of Concern in the Great Lakes Basin are being cleaned up through local action; 14 communities in Atlantic Canada have developed and are implementing comprehensive environmental management plans; industry efforts are focussing on reducing pollution in the St Lawrence Basin and reopening beaches; and a smog forecast program in the Georgia Basin is being implemented in conjunction with local governments.</td></tr>
<tr><td>Cleaner Vehicles, Fuels and Engines Agenda</td><td>In early 2001 Environment Canada plans to publish a formal Notice of Intent concerning future vehicle emission and fuel standards. These standards will contribute to a cleaner and healthier environment in both urban and non-urban areas. The planned regulations will align Canadian emission standards for on-road vehicles and engines with those of the United States, and improve fuel quality for gasoline, diesel and fuel oils.</td></tr>
<tr><td>Canada-wide Standard for Particulate Matter (PM) and Ozone</td><td>The Canadian Council of Ministers of the Environment (CCME) signed Canada Wide Standards (CWS) for PM and ozone in June 2000. All jurisdictions will develop and implement plans to achieve the CWS. As part of the process, federal and provincial environment ministers have agreed to work in partnership to develop Joint Initial Actions on PM and Ozone.</td></tr>
<tr><td>NPRI</td><td>The National Pollutant Release Inventory collects information on releases to the environment and transfers off-site of 268 pollutants from over 2000 facilities. The NPRI data is made public on a facility-specific basis, and can be searched by community. This open reporting has encouraged companies to reduce releases of pollutants.</td></tr>
<tr><td>Municipal Green Funds</td><td>The Government of Canada has signed two agreements with the Federation of Canadian Municipalities, to provide $125 million for the Green Municipal Enabling Fund and the Green Municipal Investment Fund. These funds are managed by the FCM, and are designed to provide municipalities with financial resources to invest in best practices and innovative municipal environmental projects.</td></tr>
</table>

<table>
<tr><th colspan="2">Canada Mortgage and Housing Corporation (CMHC)</th></tr>
<tr><td>Healthy Housing</td><td>Canada is committed to the development of healthy housing practices that reduce energy consumption in low-rise and multi-unit housing; lessen climate change; protect occupant health by improving the indoor environment; reduce resource use; and encourage sustainable community planning and design. CMHC's research and information transfer activities are targeted at promoting the adoption of healthier housing practices by consumers and the housing industry. The Corporation transfers the results of its research through publications, demonstrations, seminars and other channels.</td></tr>
<tr><td>Sustainable Community Indicators Program (SCIP)</td><td>To assist communities in developing and using indicators that measure progress toward sustainability, Environment Canada and CMHC have developed the SCIP, which consists of a software program and website. SCIP is a tool to help measure environmental health, resource consumption, settlement patterns, human well-being, employment and commerce.</td></tr>
</table>

<table>
<tr><th colspan="2">Other Federal Departments</th></tr>
<tr><td colspan="2">Every federal department has developed a Sustainable Development Strategy (SDS), generally including an environmental management system relating to their own operations, and additional strategies relating to the department's mandate. Details concerning the SDS for a number of departments are provided in <i>Technical Report 3: Environmental Management</i>, a background document prepared by Canada.</td></tr>
<tr><td>Transport Canada</td><td>As part of the Government of Canada Action Plan 2000 on Climate Change, a number of initiatives will be launched to reduce transportation sector emissions of greenhouse gases. The Urban Transportation Showcase initiative will be implemented in partnership with provinces, municipalities, and other partners. It will demonstrate integrated approaches to reducing emissions, while also generating other environmental, social, and economic benefits for the participating cities.</td></tr>
<tr><td>Health Canada</td><td>Health Canada led scientific assessments of the human health effects of particulate matter and ground-level ozone in the Canadian environment. The assessments, based on worldwide literature and Canadian data, led to the conclusion that at current levels these pollutants are responsible for increased premature mortality, hospital admissions, and a variety of other adverse health effects. These assessments has become the scientific basis for taking action on particulate matter and ground-level ozone in Canada.</td></tr>
<tr><td>Industry Canada</td><td>Industry Canada's Environmental Affairs Branch provides information and support on a broad range of environmental issues; promotes environmental technologies and market opportunities; showcases the Canadian environmental industry; and maintains the Canadian Environmental Solutions database (http://strategis.ic.gc.ca/SSG/es00001e.html). Industry Canada has also contributed to international workshops on sustainable building design/ technology and sustainable municipal infrastructure, and is currently undertaking a sustainable building prototype project. The department directly supports its sustainable building/infrastructure efforts through programs that facilitate development, adoption and international transfer of sustainable technology.</td></tr>
<tr><td>Treasury Board</td><td><i>Infrastructure Canada:</i> A new, national infrastructure program was confirmed in Budget 2000, with $2.65B in funding over 6 years. The program will be based on partnerships with provincial, territorial, and municipal governments and the private sector. Municipal infrastructure is one program component, and a priority is green infrastructure to preserve or enhance the quality of our environment. The Treasury Board Secretariat is also partnering with the Federation of Canadian Municipalities and the National Research Council to fund the <i>National Guide to Sustainable Municipal Infrastructure: Innovations and Best Practices.</i></td></tr>
<tr><td>Indian Affairs and Northern Development</td><td><i>Northern Sustainable Development Strategy:</i> DIAND is leading the preparation of a federal northern sustainable development strategy. The strategy is being developed with 20 other departments, in close consultation with northerners in all three territories. By developing an approach that integrates environmental, economic and social considerations, the strategy will support management of natural resources, protection of the environment, and creation of stronger communities with sustainable economies. <i>Northern Contaminants Program:</i> This program addresses the issue of contaminants in traditional foods, which accumulate in the food chain, often via airborne contaminants. <i>Hazardous Waste Clean-up:</i> DIAND is working in partnership to clean up hazardous waste sites across the North.</td></tr>
</table>

3.3 PROVINCIAL POLICIES, LEGISLATION, AND PROGRAMS

Canada's thirteen provinces and territories share responsibility for environmental management with the federal government. Indeed, each province and territory has a well developed environmental protection and management regime. Legislation, policies, and programs address questions of resource management, air and water quality, waste management, and other environmental priorities.

While it is beyond the scope of this Country Report to describe the environmental regimes established by the provinces and territories, a number of representative activities are presented in *Technical Report 3: Environmental Management,* a background document prepared by Canada. For illustrative purposes, the following list provides a sample of some of these initiatives:

- The *Ontario Provincial Water Protection Fund* is helping small Ontario municipalities to upgrade water and sewage infrastructure. The *Brownfields Showcase* is a coordinated effort of provincial ministries to introduce legislation to promote and assist in the redevelopment of former commercial and industrial lands. Ontario's *Anti-Smog Action Plan* is a partnership involving industries, environmental and health organizations, academics and all three levels of government. The goal is to reduce ozone exceedance hours by 75% by the year 2015. The *Drive Clean* Program is an inspection and maintenance program that tests automobile and vehicle exhaust as a criteria for registration renewal for certain vehicle categories.

- *The New Brunswick Watershed Protection Program* provides protection for surface waters in the 30 watersheds used as the supply source for public drinking water. Land use activities that have the potential to contaminate the water are controlled. Similarly, the Wellfield Protection Program establishes land use controls in recharge areas for wells that supply water to public systems.

- *The British Columbia Water Conservation Strategy,* the *Non-Point Source Pollution Action Plan,* and the *Fresh Water Strategy for BC* aim to increase freshwater quality and maintain water supply in the province. The *BC Clean Vehicles and Fuels Program* includes a variety of regulations, initiatives and policies to reduce emissions from vehicles and fuels. It is complemented by broader government actions targeting the *transportation sector.* Initial priorities have been ozone and fine particulate air pollution in urban areas (especially the Lower Fraser Valley); increasing attention is also being given to greenhouse gases.

- *The Prince Edward Island Waste Watch Program* is a source-separated solid waste management initiative currently serving over 13,000 homes and 1600 businesses in P.E.I. There is a 99% + participation rate in the serviced area. All municipalities in the region are partners. The program is accomplishing a 65% diversion of waste from disposal. Compost and recyclable material are recovered for use. P.E.I. also implements a used oil recovery program, which requires sellers of lubricating oil to accept return of used oil at their own or a designated alternative facility.

- *The Alberta Municipal Government Act* requires every statutory plan, land use bylaw and planning action undertaken by a municipality to be consistent with land use policies established by the Province. The policies approved in 1996 encourage municipalities to establish land use patterns embodying the principles of sustainable development, as well as appropriate land use patterns within and adjacent to areas prone to flooding, erosion, landslides, subsidence, or wildfire.

- *The Saskatchewan Community Environmental Management Steering Committee* provides a mechanism for government agencies, municipalities, and non-governmental organizations to work together to help communities better care for their environments. Three pilot programs have been implemented, and workshops have been held in 11 communities to promote community-based planning for environmental management. The program was expanded in 1999-2000.

- *The Nunavut Emergency Preparedness Program* includes emergency preparedness training for all communities. Communities will then prepare their own specific emergency plans.

3.4 MUNICIPAL/LOCAL BEST PRACTICES

Canada's local communities are actively engaged in the area of environmental management. To indicate the range of activity, this subsection presents a brief summary of selected best practices at the local level in Canada. Sources and additional information are provided in the background document prepared by Canada entitled *Technical Report 3: Environmental Management.*

Creating a Sustainable Community: Hamilton-Wentworth's VISION 2020

Town/City/Municipality/Organization: Region of Hamilton-Wentworth, community groups, industry and other levels of government

Description of project: VISION 2020, the Region's Sustainable Community Initiative, includes a variety of actions under the umbrella of sustainable development. Formally started in 1990, the initiative has involved thousands of citizens in the development of a community vision for sustainability, and actions for realizing the vision. A renewal process, with similar community-based consultations, subsequently reaffirmed the goals and directions of the initiative and established a non-profit partnership, ACTION 2020, to continue the program.

VISION 2020 has led to the development of new policies, specific projects, and partnerships between government, the community and industry. Outputs include over 3,500 hectares of land protected through local conservation authorities; construction of combined sewer overflow tanks; creation of over 20 km of bicycle lanes and pathways; conversion of buses to natural gas; planting of over 300,000 trees; diversion of waste through recycling; and much more. The initiative also generated detailed strategies and actions for creating a sustainable region, which were adopted by Regional Council as a guide for decision-making and have been reflected in a new Official Plan and economic strategy.

The Sustainable Indicators project is an intrinsic component of VISION 2020. The indicators are an on-going tool to help monitor progress towards sustainable development and provide feedback to the community. The indicators were selected based on community input, and reflect the social, economic and environmental elements of sustainability. Each year, the results are presented at the Annual Sustainable Community Day.

EcoQuest – Reducing Our Ecological Footprint

Town/City/Municipality/Organization: Centre for Sustainable Studies, Lever Pond's (a division of Unilever Canada Ltd.), educators, and NGOs

Description of project: According to the proponents, the ecological 'footprint' of Canadians (i.e. the productive land required to sustain our level of consumption) is four times larger than what is equitable or sustainable on a global basis. EcoQuest, Reducing Your Environmental Footprint (recently renamed EcoVoyageurs) is designed to achieve a sustainable future by changing the way people think about, value and act towards the environment.

The ecological footprint concept is being used in classrooms across Canada. Young people are being taught how to measure their personal ecological impact, and have been challenged to find innovative means of reducing their own footprint. The change in attitudes and behaviour of participants has not been determined, but schools have reported actions such as school composting, recycling, and no-garbage days. The concept is also being communicated to business and government leaders, and the ecological footprint of several Canadian cities has been calculated, providing decision-makers with a tool to measure the ecological impact of their strategic plans.

Zero Waste 2005

Town/City/Municipality/Organization: Annapolis County Environmental Protection Association, Town of Annapolis Royal (Nova Scotia)

Description of project: The goal of the initiative is to design, develop and implement a waste management strategy focusing on waste minimization. The concept is to have a low-cost, low-tech, and locally-based and controlled system which utilizes the four 'Rs': Reducing, Reusing, Recycling, and stimulating citizens to be Responsible. The system will use well-tested and simple methods for handling materials in five waste streams (organic, recyclable, toxic/hazardous/ biological, construction/demolition, and residuals). The goal is zero waste sent to landfills by 2005 – the 400th anniversary of the Town.

Key elements in measuring the success of the initiative will be how much waste remains at the end of the process, how much harmful waste has been removed, the use made of resource materials, local employment generated, and cost savings to the Town. The key lesson learned to date is that waste management does not need to be regionalized, high-tech and high-cost.

Sustainable Okotoks – Leaving a Legacy

Town/City/Municipality/Organization: Town of Okotoks (Alberta)

Description of project: The Town of Okotoks has recognized environmental limits to growth. The Town has decided to live within the carrying capacity of its Sheep River watershed, restricting itself to an ultimate population of 25,000-30,000. The concept is based on a community-driven vision: to respond to, rather than manipulate, the environment that sustains us. The vision includes social conscience, economic opportunity, and fiscal responsibility. Partnerships and public participation have been critical to planning for this future and establishing the necessary political and administrative will.

The Sustainable Okotoks vision has been reflected in new land use and infrastructure plans for the Town. The vision includes substantial urban design modifications, including reduction of reliance on automobiles through mixed-use neighbourhoods with opportunities for employment (including home-based businesses). It also includes a linked off-street pedestrian pathway and open space system, more robust landscaping requirements, and pursuit of eco-efficiency through recycling, water conservation, architectural regulations and urban forests.

Ouje-Bougoumou Cree First Nation

Town/City/Municipality/Organization: Ouje-Bougoumou Cree First Nation, Government of Canada, Energy Research Laboratory of Natural Resources Canada

Description of project: The indigenous Cree community of Ouje-Bougoumou constructed a new village within its traditional territory in northern Quebec, based on the dual concepts of self-determination and sustainable development. One of the innovative initiatives in the new village was the installation of a district heating system. In this system, wood waste is burned in a central plant, where water is heated and then transported via underground pipes to all the buildings in the village.

The district heating system has proven to be an effective, efficient method of providing heat and domestic hot water in a harsh climate. In addition to the environmental benefits of utilizing 2000 tonnes of industrial wood waste annually, the system has created four new jobs for local people, reduced energy costs significantly, and created the potential to generate funds for community development purposes once the capital costs are repaid. There is growing interest in Canada in this type of locally-based energy system, which can reduce reliance on utilities and generate socio-economic benefits to communities.

Auto-Recycling Best Practices

Town/City/Municipality/Organization: BC Automotive Recyclers Association, Insurance Corporation of BC, and Provincial Ministries of Transportation and Environment

Description of project: The dismantling of automobiles involves handling a significant quantity of hazardous materials (e.g. fuels, motor oil, transmission and brake fluids, refrigerant, antifreeze, batteries, mercury, lead, asbestos, etc.). Poor waste management at auto recycling facilities has caused significant contamination of soil, as well as surface and ground waters. The BC Automotive Recycling Association (B-CAR) launched the project to encourage members to manage their operations in an environmentally sound manner. The project developed pollution control prevention technical documents (including Best Management Practices, a Pollution Prevention Guide, and a Code of Practice), and provided training for operators.

Although the province has not enacted regulations based on the Code of Practice, one significant municipality has done so and members of the Association are voluntarily applying the Code. Key lessons learned from the project include the importance of a partnership between industry and government in preparing and enforcing regulations. Industry participation ensures that the objectives are achievable and economically feasible.

3.5 STAKEHOLDER PERSPECTIVES

This subsection presents a synthesis of the views of selected Canadian stakeholders on environmental management issues. Further details on these perspectives are provided in the *Technical Reports* and appendices prepared by Canada. A list of stakeholders interviewed is provided in Appendix A.

What Are the Most Important Agenda-related Issues for Canadian Stakeholders?

Stakeholders identified the interrelated needs for more environmentally-sound transportation systems and better-planned urban growth (i.e., less urban sprawl) as priority issues. Significant re-thinking at the policy level is needed to begin dealing with these issues. Other key issues include infrastructure for clean water (related to inadequate wastewater treatment); mechanisms for public participation in sustainable urban development; and more specific issues such as urban pesticide use.

How Pro-active Governments Have Been to Further the Agenda?

There was a general recognition among stakeholders that some municipalities are becoming strongly engaged on environmental issues. According to one stakeholder, for example, the Greater Vancouver Regional District and the Fraser Valley Regional District have proven to be world leaders in some aspects of sustainable urban development. Some stakeholders feel that this momentum at the municipal level is not being complemented by leadership at more senior levels of government.

These individuals believe that, for the most part, there is no explicit mandate or focus with respect to urban issues in either federal or provincial environment ministries.

A number of stakeholders suggest that, while municipalities are becoming seriously engaged, there is need for significant capacity-building at this level. The lack of integration of the individual components of urban development also remains a stumbling block to sustainability.

What Is the Stakeholder Assessment of Progress? What Lessons Have Been Learned?

Stakeholders noted a range of lessons learned. It is important to act firmly and with foresight to ensure future benefits. For example, the province's creation of agricultural reserves around Vancouver was crucial to containing urban sprawl, and to the implementation of the "livable region" strategy. There is also a need to engage the private sector in longer-term environmental objectives, in part by making the economic case for action. At the municipal level, stakeholders also noted the need to transfer lessons learned regarding successful citizen engagement in some areas (e.g., waste management) to other areas (e.g., energy use, clean air, clean water).

CHAPTER 4. ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

4.1 INDICATORS

This subsection presents data for a series of economic development indicators as specified in the UNCHS reporting format. (For clarity of presentation, the order of the UNCHS priorities has been reversed in this discussion.)

Priority 15. Stimulate Productive Employment Opportunities and Encourage Public-Private Sector Partnerships

There are large regional variations in economies across Canada. These variations include differences in rates of local economic growth; social and economic infrastructure; family income levels (highest in Ontario and BC and lowest in the four eastern provinces); and employment prospects (with unemployment rates lowest in Ontario and the Prairie provinces).

The most common measurement of regional economic health is **Gross Domestic Product** (GDP). Appropriate GDP data at the city level is not available from Statistics Canada; however GDP is reported for each province. Table 4-1 gives income-based GDP figures for 1995 and 1998 for the provinces in which the five focus cities are located. Each of these provinces shows significant growth during this period. Also, information from other sources indicates that Calgary, Toronto and Vancouver all showed GDP growth above the national average of 25% throughout the 1990's.

Table 4-1: Provincial and National GDP, income based, 1995 and 1998

	British Columbia		Alberta		Ontario		Quebec		Nova Scotia		Canada	
GDP in millions $CAD	1995	1998	1995	1998	1995	1998	1995	1998	1995	1998	1995	1998
	$105,319	$113,945	$91,634	$106,174	$327,246	$372,630	$177,107	$193,695	$19,263	$21,110	$807,088	$901,805

Unemployment is another good indicator of economic health. Table 2-4 in Chapter 2 presents unemployment rates for 1991, 1996, and 2000 showing a general decrease in unemployment across the country during this period.

Statistical data on **public-private sector partnerships** is not available. However, many Canadian cities have established such partnerships to stimulate the local economy and provide a cost-effective method to meet needs in such areas as road construction and sewage/storm drain services. For instance, Calgary recently established partnerships with the private sector to manage transportation construction projects, upgrade the city utility customer information system, and undertake a convention centre expansion. The City of Toronto has set up an $11-million Capital Revolving Fund to develop new, affordable housing via partnerships with both the private and non-profit sectors.

Priority 16. Strengthen Small and Micro-enterprises, Particularly Those Developed by Women

Canada does not regularly collect data on the informal employment sector in this country, since it is estimated to be small in relation to the formal employment sector. Industry Canada and other agencies do, however, have a host of initiatives underway to support small business development (as part of the formal employment sector). Details are provided in Subsections 4.2 and 4.3.

In addition, the place of home-based businesses in community development is increasingly recognized, particularly by small and/or rural communities in their community development plans.

4.2 FEDERAL POLICIES, LEGISLATION, AND PROGRAMS

This subsection presents information on the activities of key federal government departments and agencies in the area of economic development.

Industry Canada	
Small Business Development	Industry Canada offers a number of national economic development programs and services, including support for small business development through various initiatives. *Strategis* is a website for the provision of information of interest to business (www.strategis.ic.ca). The site also contains Canada's most comprehensive guide to micro credit services. *The Canada Small Business Financing Act* provides for a partial guarantee to financial institutions making certain small business loans. In 1998-99 the program supported over 17,000 loans with an average size of under $80,000. *The Canada Business Service Centres* provide a one-stop service for small business, including information and contacts with the federal, provincial and in many cases municipal governments and local private sector organizations. *The Business Development Bank of Canada* is an independent Crown Corporation that reports to Parliament through the Minister of Industry. It has a mandate to provide services to small businesses on a profitable basis, and specializes in smaller, higher risk loans.
Public Private Infrastructure (PPI) Support	A private sector Ad Hoc Steering Committee has been formed to provide policy guidance on Public Private Infrastructure. The committee is currently focussing on promoting the wider use of Public Private Partnerships (PPP) in Canada, and addressing PPP project financing issues.

Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada (AAFC)	
The Canadian Rural Partnership	*The Canadian Rural Partnership* (CRP) focusses on building a higher quality of life in rural and remote communities. The Partnership is the key framework supporting federal rural policy efforts. The *Rural Secretariat* in AAFC provides leadership and coordination, working with other federal departments and *Rural Teams* in each province. Key initiatives include: • Since 1998, the CRP has conducted an ongoing *Rural Dialogue* with Canadians from all parts of the country. This dialogue has helped the government build an overall rural strategy, the Framework for Action in Rural Canada, and define priority areas. • The CRP promotes greater inclusion of rural considerations in federal policies and programs. All new policies and programs are now scrutinized through a "*rural lens*" to assess their effects on rural Canada. • The CRP supports community-based *Pilot Projects* that test innovative new ways of achieving sustainable community development. These projects are funded in collaboration with the private and voluntary sectors, co-operatives, and various levels of government. The projects are varied, relating, among other themes, to community use of information technology, small rural businesses, rural youth, and Aboriginal peoples.

Canadian Agricultural Rural Communities Initiative (CARCI)	CARCI was established to help sustain and develop agricultural rural communities in Canada, particularly those affected by changes in the agricultural sector. The initiative provides funding for rural coordination organizations; projects that develop community-based partnerships responding to rural community development issues; workshops, conferences and seminars; and research related to agricultural rural communities. Eligible recipients include individuals and organizations involved in rural issues.

Department of Indian Affairs and Northern Development	
Resource Sector	The *Resource Partnership Program* assists First Nations and Inuit communities to participate in, and benefit from, large natural resource development projects. This is achieved through strategic planning and negotiation of working agreements, in partnership with industry and provincial/territorial governments. The *Resource Acquisition Initiative (RAI)* assists communities to acquire natural resource permits and licences by funding resource-sector and related business opportunities. In 1999-2000, the RAI supported 35 projects.
Aboriginal Business	The *Economic Development Opportunity Fund (EDOF)* provides financial assistance in the form of matching "equity gap" funding to First Nation and Inuit businesses via their respective Community Economic Development Organizations. The EDOF has supported 105 projects in various sectors of the economy, including tourism, transportation and knowledge-based initiatives. The *Access to Capital* element of the *Aboriginal Business Development Initiative* was launched in 1999. It will bring the Aboriginal financial institutions providing lending to Aboriginal businesses into a national network; provide that network with the capacity to lever additional capital from the private sector; ensure developmental lending becomes available nationally; and provide services to the institutions to increase their viability.
Other programs (partial list)	The *Youth Entrepreneurs Micro-Credit Lending Program* works with the National Aboriginal Capital Corporations Association to improve access to debt and equity capital. The *Aboriginal Procurement Strategy* led to $75 million in contracts producing 300 Aboriginal business start-ups and promoting job creation.

<table>
<tr><th colspan="2">Other Federal Departments</th></tr>
<tr><td colspan="2">Canada's approach to regional development includes equalization initiatives designed to provide all regions with comparable levels of service in such areas as health and education. This includes federal transfers to the provinces such as the <i>Canada Health and Social Transfer</i>, and other initiatives such as the Labour Market Development Agreements established by the federal government with most provinces and territories (see the Human Resources Development Canada initiatives described in Section 2.2).</td></tr>
<tr><td>Economic Development Agencies</td><td>The federal government also uses national and regional programs to support community economic development. The government has established a number of regional economic development agencies (in Atlantic Canada, Quebec, Northern Ontario, and Western Canada) which deliver programs designed to promote innovation, help small and medium sized enterprises grow, encourage trade and investment, and support community economic development.
Another key federal program instrument is the Community Futures Development Corporations (CFDCs). These are non-profit organizations that support local small business through loans and advisory services, and support community economic development by participating in planning and network development within the community. Additional services can include self-employment assistance, programs targeting young entrepreneurs, mentoring, and informal training/education. The CFDCs are a grass-roots approach for non-metropolitan areas. There are about 240 of these corporations across Canada.</td></tr>
</table>

CMHC	The *Canadian Centre for Public-Private Partnerships in Housing* works with community-based groups, acting as a catalyst for housing partnerships by providing proposal funding, enabling tools, information, and expert advice. CMHC insures financing through the Centre, thus facilitating creation of affordable housing without direct government assistance and often with an emphasis on innovative financing techniques. The Canadian *Housing Export Centre* promotes export of Canadian housing expertise, products and services. CMHC conducts research into markets, provides information on export opportunities, and helps develop strategic directions for exports. The *International Training Team* delivers seminars and training sessions, in order to share Canadian housing expertise around the world.

4.3 PROVINCIAL POLICIES, LEGISLATION, AND PROGRAMS

Canada's thirteen provinces and territories play a lead role in economic development within their jurisdictions. Indeed, each province and territory has programs and policies in place to strengthen the provincial/territorial economy, and contribute to the economic well-being of local people, businesses, and communities.

While it is beyond the scope of this Country Report to describe the full range of economic development initiatives undertaken by the provinces and territories, a number of representative activities are presented in *Technical Report 4: Economic Development,* a background document prepared by Canada. Some common approaches identified include:

- Cautious management of public finances, with budget surpluses, tax reductions, and gradual debt retirement in most jurisdictions.
- Adoption of targets, strategies, and plans to strengthen specific and important sectors of the economy (for instance, information technology, manufacturing, energy, mining, agriculture, forestry, fishery, environment, tourism, culture, and services).
- Adoption of strategies to create a climate for prosperity, by stimulating and attracting investment; encouraging innovation and commercialization of technology; and supporting economic drivers such as education, science, and research.
- Provision of business support services such as "single window" access to government programs, financing, research, and development of tools to assist local authorities.
- Delivery of promotional initiatives designed to stimulate export and trade, encourage business to locate in the province/territory, attract immigrants, and draw tourists and other visitors.
- Creation of economic development agencies at the provincial/territorial, regional, or community level, to serve as focal points for various economic development activities.
- Selected incentives such as grants, forgivable loans, and targeted tax reductions for priority sectors (e.g. small business) or types of organization (e.g. cooperatives).
- Economic development programs oriented to disadvantaged groups (for instance, economic, educational, and employment opportunities for Aboriginal peoples).
- Capacity-building, training, and other support for community-based economic development organizations and personnel involved in local economic development.
- Investment in infrastructure to support economic activity (e.g. transportation and communication systems and, increasingly, "quality of life" infrastructure).
- Review of regulatory and administrative regimes to identify opportunities to reduce unnecessary burdens on businesses ("red tape").

4.4 MUNICIPAL/LOCAL BEST PRACTICES

Canada's local communities are actively engaged in the area of economic development. To indicate the range of activity, this subsection presents a brief summary of selected best practices at the local level in Canada. Sources and additional information are provided in the background document prepared by Canada entitled *Technical Report 4: Economic Development.*

Culturally Appropriate Economic Development – The Métis Settlements of Alberta
Town/City/Municipality/Organization: Gift Lake Métis Settlement, Métis Settlements General Council, EcoPlan International, and the Province of Alberta
Description of project: The Gift Lake Métis Settlement is one of eight Métis Settlements in Northern Alberta. It is a small community with a population of under 1000, a secure land base, and the right to local self-government. In 1997, the Gift Lake Settlement adopted a community-based, participatory decision support model to assist with local governance. Based on traditional values, this process resulted in the development of economic activities which incorporate Métis culture and modern enterprise (e.g. ecotourism and wild game ranching). The process also resulted in a 'green accounting' model to assist in governance and negotiations with resource companies; culturally sensitive environmental monitoring; knowledge sharing through the development of a resource centre; and traditional land use maps for incorporation into policy and bylaws. The initiative promoted a new understanding of economic development – one that is compatible with Métis culture and promotes traditional activities. The innovation and success of the Gift Lake initiative inspired other Alberta Métis Settlements to replicate and expand the work by developing an Economic Viability Strategy for their communities, while also retaining historical, cultural and traditional backgrounds and customs.

The Western Valley Development Authority
Town/City/Municipality/Organization: Western Valley Development Authority (Nova Scotia), governments, the private sector and NGOs
Description of project: The Western Valley Development Authority (WVDA) was created in response to a downturn in the local economy resulting from the collapse of employment in the fishery and the closure of a naval base. WVDA established a community-based partnership linking governments, the private sector and several NGOs to create an economic development strategy. While traditional natural resource industries (including fishing, forestry, and agriculture) continue to play a key role in the local economy, WVDA has refocused community understanding of these resources to emphasize long-term sustainability. At the same time, it has carried out several projects to develop and promote new environmental and information technology opportunities. Studies were undertaken by local people, resulting in action plans which identified several hundred candidate projects, and specific projects were implemented in areas such as ecotourism, biodiversity conservation, habitat restoration, sustainable energy, innovative technologies and resource management. Today, the community has renewed vitality, unemployment in the area has declined, and business start-ups have increased dramatically.

4.5 STAKEHOLDER PERSPECTIVES

This subsection presents a synthesis of the views of selected Canadian stakeholders on economic development issues. Further details on these perspectives are provided in the *Technical Reports* and appendices prepared by Canada. A list of stakeholders interviewed is provided in Appendix A.

What Are the Most Important Agenda-related Issues for Canadian Stakeholders?

Stakeholders emphasized the importance of public-private partnerships as a vehicle for stimulating sustainable economic development, but there was also some caution regarding the limitations of this approach. It was also noted that it is challenging to work on economic development at the local level, given the larger drivers such as the structure of the economy, free trade, and globalization. Aboriginal organizations noted the need for a more holistic approach to economic development, integrating activities such as housing, manufacturing and resource development.

How Pro-active Have Governments Been to Further the Agenda?

Municipalities are attempting to be proactive, but stakeholders noted the need for more support from senior levels of government to build up the capacity and the tools to do the job. First Nation governments have made some progress in this area, and applaud recent actions by the federal government that recognize the need to create a sustainable economic base within reserves.

What Is the Stakeholder Assessment of Progress? What Lessons Have Been Learned?

Interviewees offered few comments on overall economic development issues, but noted progress in such areas as the promotion of partnerships, micro-enterprises, women and Aboriginal business. It was also noted that information technology and greater economic integration within North America are both having an impact on decisions about where economic development can and should occur. Urban centres are in greater competition, which can help turn attention to the quality of social services. In the view of some stakeholders, to maintain competitiveness, it will be necessary for senior governments to invest more heavily in cities.

With respect to economic development amongst Aboriginal peoples, Aboriginal organizations believe that the federal government needs to invest further in creating sustainable economic bases on reserves. First Nations are also looking for greater control over the management of their economic development on-reserve, and emphasize the need for better consultations with governments to achieve their goals. With respect to off-reserve activity, challenges include funding levels and, according to the Métis National Council, there are barriers that prevent Métis from using the usual economic development services and mainstream institutions.

CHAPTER 5. GOVERNANCE

5.1 INDICATORS

This subsection presents data for a series of governance indicators as specified in the UNCHS reporting format.

Priority 17. Promote Decentralization and Strengthen Local Authorities

The structure of government in Canada is quite decentralized. The Canadian Constitution assigns overall responsibility for municipal government to the provinces. The federal government has no legislative authority with respect to municipalities. It does, however, impact this level of government through, for instance, monetary, trade and taxation policy.

Municipal government structures and responsibilities vary across Canada, as each province has developed its own approach to local governance. Beyond their constitutional responsibility for municipal government, provinces may fund and exert varying degrees of control over many of the areas operated by local municipalities. Historically this has included health care, education, social services, housing, water supply, public transit, etc. However, in a number of provinces, roles have been realigned, and municipal governments have increased responsibility in some of these areas.

The expansion of municipal government responsibilities has translated into the adoption of a number of new Municipal Acts by provincial legislatures. New legislation may, for instance, formalize the right to be consulted on issues that affect municipalities, and in some cases provide new powers that recognize the new role of municipalities. Many municipalities also have their own "charter" of governance, in addition to the more general provincial Municipal Act. Such charters may address such issues as municipal powers, terms of office of elected members, and duties and powers of elected bodies.

Property tax is the main source of municipal revenue. Municipalities have the right to set local tax levels and user charges for services, and to establish annual budgets. In most circumstances, municipalities know the amount of funding they will receive from the provinces prior to the local budget setting process.

Priority 18. Encourage and Support Participation and Civic Engagement

It is now common for municipalities to involve citizens in participatory processes prior to new major developments, alterations in zoning, and other public projects. There is typically a process whereby a notice is posted and residents are given time to submit comments. Often, a public meeting allows citizens to voice their views. In the case of development projects involving federal and provincial jurisdictions, the environmental impact assessment process may demand that public consultations be held, and that opinions expressed be taken into consideration before the project advances.

Priority 19. Ensure Transparent, Accountable and Efficient Governance of Towns, Cities and Metropolitan Areas

Cities in Canada do have transparent and accountable local governance. There is regular independent auditing of municipal accounts, and these are always made public. Most cities also publish tenders and contracts for municipal services. Conflict of interest issues are often dealt with in Municipal Acts, requiring a councillor to declare any conflict with respect to an item being dealt with by the municipal council. The councillor abstains from any discussion or vote pertaining to the item.

Local government revenue and expenditures are made public. However, revenue and expenditure estimates are not directly comparable between municipalities due to differences in municipal jurisdictions and the nature of local responsibilities.

5.2 FEDERAL POLICIES, LEGISLATION, AND PROGRAMS

This subsection presents information on federal activities in relation to governance at the local level.

The government strongly supports participatory approaches to governance at all levels, and this approach is reflected in the programs and initiatives of most federal departments. However, as noted in Subsection 5.1, the federal government has no legislative authority with respect to municipalities, and as such is not directly involved in governance issues for these local authorities. Accordingly, this subsection focuses on two supportive and related issues: civic engagement, and the provision of basic data for decision-making at all levels. In addition, this subsection provides an overview of federal activities relating to governance of Aboriginal communities.

Civic Engagement

In June 2000, following a process of consultation with the voluntary sector in Canada, the government committed more than $90 million over five years to the Voluntary Sector Initiative. Through this program, the government will develop its relationship with the voluntary sector, resulting in improved government service delivery to Canadians and increased effectiveness of government programs. The program will also result in strengthened communities and increased capacity of the voluntary sector to meet the needs of Canadian society. Specific elements of the Initiative include: development of an Accord between the Government of Canada and the voluntary sector; strengthening the capacity of the voluntary sector; promoting volunteerism; involvement of the voluntary sector in the development of government policies and programs; and improvements to the regulatory framework within which the voluntary sector operates.

The Voluntary Sector Initiative is led by the government's Privy Council Office, but involves more than 20 federal departments and agencies. In addition, many individual departments have programs oriented towards the voluntary sector within their areas of jurisdiction. For instance, Health Canada is working to enhance the Department's relationship with the voluntary health sector in protection, promotion, prevention and care; and is collaborating with National Voluntary Organizations working in health to strengthen their capacity to maintain and improve the health of Canadians.

Data for Decision-Making

Statistics Canada is an internationally respected data collection agency, which regularly gathers and publishes information on Canada's people, land, and economy. A national Census is undertaken every five years, and Statistics Canada also regularly conducts special surveys, studies, or reports on selected topics. As a result, Canadian data is very current, and Canada has the ability to analyse trends and identify conditions in a timely manner. This central data source enables other agencies and departments, the private sector, NGOs, academics, and individuals to access comprehensive and reliable information on a regular basis, in support of sound planning and decision-making.

Aboriginal Governance

Negotiations are currently underway for more than 80 self-government agreements, affecting more than half of Canada's First Nations (North American Indian) and Inuit communities. A number of agreements are in advanced stages of negotiation. Self-government negotiations have also been pursued with Métis or off-reserve Aboriginal organizations in Manitoba, Saskatchewan, Alberta and British Columbia.

Numerous initiatives are underway to help make the transition to stronger governments and communities among Canada's Aboriginal peoples. For example:

- A number of initiatives focus on helping Aboriginal communities to develop new self-government models -- models that support good governance in negotiations, written constitutions, community consultations, communication strategies, and other areas.
- Consultation with the Assembly of First Nations has led to planning for a Governance Centre, which could serve as a centre of excellence to provide capacity building for First Nations, in such areas as core governance, research, and knowledge sharing.
- More than 100 professional development projects were initiated in 1999-2000, to assist the First Nations and Inuit public service to enhance experience and knowledge in relation to lands, resources, administration, and government structure.
- The Joint Initiative for Policy Development is working to develop a plan to transfer greater control of lands and trusts functions to First Nations.
- Métis and off-reserve Aboriginal groups, in partnership with provincial and federal governments, have made significant progress since the implementation of governance initiatives in areas crucial to social and cultural development.

5.3 PROVINCIAL POLICIES, LEGISLATION, AND PROGRAMS

Canada's thirteen provinces and territories are actively engaged in innovation in the area of governance. Some of this activity relates to governance at the provincial/territorial level, and is **not** addressed here. But much activity is also focussed on municipal and local governance. To indicate the range of such activity, this subsection presents information on a number of representative activities by provincial and territorial governments. A more comprehensive listing is provided in *Technical Report 5: Governance,* a background document prepared by Canada.

Province of Ontario	
Local Services Realignment	Local Services Realignment has redefined provincial and municipal roles and responsibilities concerning service delivery. On January 1, 1998 responsibility for funding and delivering $3 billion in services was transferred from the province to municipalities, to be phased in over a five year period. Municipalities assumed full responsibility with respect to transit, municipal airports, police, property assessment services, septic system inspections/approvals, sewer and water, and social housing. Other services are now shared 80/20 between the province and municipalities: child care, Ontario disability support, Ontario Works (welfare), domiciliary hostels, and Ontario drug benefits. In exchange, the province assumed responsibility for funding $2.5 billion of services previously funded by residential property tax. This realignment of responsibility was supported by a reform of assessment and property tax policy.
Planning Approval Authority	Since 1997 the Province has delegated/assigned more powers to approve applications under the *Planning Act* to approximately 90 municipalities. In addition, through changes to the *Planning Act,* the Province has exempted amendments to official plans from Provincial approval, for over 50 regions, counties and separated cities.
Municipal Restructuring	Since 1996, the Government of Ontario has undertaken a significant restructuring of municipal government. The number of municipalities has been reduced from 815 to 447. The goals of municipal restructuring are: lower taxes; less bureaucracy; clearer lines of responsibility; and better accountability at the municipal level.
Performance Measures	Beginning in 2001, all municipalities will measure their performance in core service areas and report their performance to taxpayers. The province has developed 35 tests in nine areas: water, sewer, garbage, fire services, police services, social services, local government (operating costs), land-use planning, and transportation.
Encouraging Volunteerism	The Premier's Round Table on Voluntary Action provides leadership for voluntarism in Ontario. Government programs include: the Ontario Screening Initiative, a community-based approach to help volunteer groups screen, train, monitor and supervise volunteers; the Good Neighbours Program, which promotes volunteer activities at the community level; community and province-wide grants for voluntary organizations; and honours and awards to recognize outstanding professional and volunteer contributions to Ontario.

Province of Manitoba	
Mee-noo-stah-tan Mi-ni-si-win Family Justice Project	This project provides culturally appropriate, community-based justice programs for Aboriginal families. The 24-month project is administered by Manitoba Keewatinowi Okimakanak, and offers a supportive peacemaking process that leaves the responsibility for resolving family conflicts in the hands of the family and extended community.
Restructuring child and family services delivery	Separate memorandums of understanding were signed with the Manitoba Métis Federation, the Assembly of Manitoba Chiefs, and the Manitoba Keewatinowi Okimakanak, stating that locally developed solutions are the most effective and practical approach to ensuring self-determination and healthy communities. The MOUs will make it possible for the First Nations agencies and the Manitoba Métis Federation to deliver the full range of services under *The Child and Family Services Act*, and adoption services under *The Adoption Act*.

Province of British Columbia	
Municipal Act Reform	The Ministry of Municipal Affairs and the Union of BC Municipalities worked together to complete a review of the *Municipal Act*, leading to the new *Local Government Act* in 2000. Nine principles served to focus the review, including: balance between the interests of citizens, local governments and the provincial government; broad powers that allow local governments to do business in new, innovative and more effective ways; flexibility that allows local governments to respond to local needs and circumstances; provincial involvement that is limited to instances where the province has a clear purpose, responsibility or interest; accountability of local governments to citizens; fair and open local government decision-making processes; matching local government resources to responsibilities; and provincial consultation with local government on matters which directly impact them.
Treaty Negotiations	The Ministry of Aboriginal Affairs has primary responsibility for treaty negotiations in British Columbia. Through treaties and other negotiated agreements, the ministry works with other agencies and First Nations to enhance the social and economic well-being of Aboriginal people and their communities. The negotiation process deals with far-reaching issues such as land ownership, self-government, wildlife and environmental management, sharing resources, financial benefits and taxation. There are presently 42 First Nations in the British Columbia Treaty Process, representing about two-thirds of the 197 Bands in B.C.

Province of Prince Edward Island	
Health and Community Services Act	The *Health and Community Services Act* (adopted in 1993 and amended in 1997), establishes five regional health authorities in the province, and provides for partly elected, partly appointed boards. The authorities are responsible for delivery of all health and social services in their geographical area. This approach provides improved coordination and integration of services at the regional level, increased efficiency, and reduced duplication.

Province of Alberta	
Community based service delivery	The Child and Family Services Act mandates that child and family services be locally delivered by 18 regional Authorities. Services include child welfare, day care, family violence prevention, services for children with disabilities, and early intervention. Authority boards are comprised of community members who provide leadership to ensure that services respond to community needs yet adhere to the policies and standards of the Ministry.
Municipal governance	*The Alberta Capital Region Governance* review was initiated to determine how to achieve excellence in the local governance of the Alberta Capital Region, addressing such questions as the multiplicity of municipalities in the region. *The Municipal Excellence Program* is inventorying its municipalities' governance and administrative practices to identify leading practices and benchmarks. The program will allow municipalities to evaluate their practices compared to their peers, and enable them to set targets for improvement.

Alternative dispute resolution	*Inter-municipal Mediation*: The province encourages resolution of inter-municipal disputes through mediation rather than through more adversarial, time-consuming, and costly appeals to the Municipal Government Board (MGB). In 1999, mediation was made a prerequisite to certain MGB dispute hearings. The Province's mediation service includes information and education; a register of mediators; evaluation of whether a dispute is soluble by mediation; and cost-sharing. *Intra-municipal Alternative Dispute Resolution*: The province also assists municipalities with alternative dispute resolution systems for intra-municipal disputes (e.g., disputes related to development permits). The province provides information, and helps municipalities hire a consultant to design improved dispute resolution approaches.

Province of Saskatchewan	
Municipalities Acts	In recent years, Saskatchewan has amended the *Northern Municipalities Act, Urban Municipalities Act,* and *Rural Municipalities Act* in order to: • Strengthen local authorities (e.g. changes to make the assessment appeals process more fair and transparent to taxpayers) • Increase flexibility in taxation (e.g. introduction of new tax tools and authority to offer abatements of municipal and school taxes in specific situations) • Provide new agreement-making powers (confirming the ability of municipalities to enter into agreements with district health boards). Additional proposed changes will clarify the provincial/municipal relationship, remove unnecessary provincial intrusion in municipal affairs, and enhance the decision-making capacity and autonomy of municipalities.
Other Acts	Amendments to the *Local Government Elections Act* have expanded local authority and capacity in the local election process by allowing mechanized voting and counting. Changes to the *Planning & Development Act* allow more decision-making authority at the local level while ensuring the electorate receives notification when certain applications are received.

Territory of Nunavut	
Decentralization	To ensure the benefits of the Nunavut Land Claim Agreement are distributed throughout a large geographic area, the Government of Nunavut has directed that departments decentralize some key operations. The Department of Community Government and Transportation has decentralized various Divisions to smaller communities (e.g. Kugluktuk, Gjoa Haven). The Baffin Regional Office has also been decentralized to Cape Dorset.
Municipal legislation review	Working with the Nunavut Association of Municipalities, the government will develop the policy basis for a new Nunavut Municipal Act. A working group began the review in summer 2000. Problems in the current system and challenges for municipal governments and residents have been identified. The Legislative Assembly will consider recommendations for changes to legislation in 2001.
Municipal finance review	Working with municipal staff, the Nunavut government is conducting an assessment of funding needs by community. Principles for funding have been developed, an action plan has been created, and reviews of five funding areas have commenced.

5.4 MUNICIPAL/LOCAL BEST PRACTICES

Canada's local communities are actively engaged in innovation in the area of governance. To indicate the range of activity, this subsection presents a brief summary of one selected best practice at the local level in Canada. Sources and additional information are provided in the background document prepared by Canada entitled *Technical Report 5: Governance.*

Toronto's Changing Communities: Innovative Responses
Town/City/Municipality/Organization: City of Toronto (formerly Metropolitan Toronto), community service organizations
Description of project: The initiative was designed to promote new ways of planning and delivering city services to reflect the changing ethno-cultural mix of communities in Toronto. It promotes and strengthens communities and ensures equitable access to resources by providing culturally and linguistically appropriate services. The initiative is also reflected in the recruitment of members of ethno-racial communities to sit on the boards and committees of established institutions, and to participate in program delivery as staff or volunteers. The project has brought about lasting changes. It has increased community participation in social and service planning, development and delivery, and in the decision-making process of government and its services. It has established and strengthened community partnerships with government. It has developed culturally-sensitive services within the City administration and the community, and increased the accountability to communities of both the political and staff levels of the City. It has improved communication with the City's diverse communities and increased staff understanding of and respect for these communities. It has also developed the framework for improving access to the City's services.

5.5 STAKEHOLDER PERSPECTIVES

This subsection presents a synthesis of the views of selected Canadian stakeholders on governance issues. Further details on these perspectives are provided in the *Technical Reports* and appendices prepared by Canada. A list of stakeholders interviewed is provided in Appendix A.

What Are the Most Important Agenda-related Issues for Canadian Stakeholders?

The principal issue raised by stakeholders is recognition of the role of municipal governments and local stakeholders as partners in governance design, delivery and accountability. The common view was that governance needs to be shared between levels of government and the value of local input to governance activities given greater recognition. Two stakeholders noted the need for capacity-building measures at the municipal level to effectively deliver in new program areas, or, where warranted, a continued leader/provider role for provincial and/or federal governments where there is a lack of local capacity.

In the context of Aboriginal claims for greater self-government, Aboriginal representatives advocated a greater role for existing governance/administrative/program delivery infrastructures. In particular, they called for a more holistic approach to Aboriginal (on-reserve) development, managed by Aboriginals themselves.

How Pro-active Have Governments Been to Further the Agenda?

There was recognition by the majority of stakeholders that some progress had been made on governance issues (e.g., revamped municipal legislation, recognized need for partnerships). Aboriginal organizations criticized the lack of devolvement by the federal government of a larger "basket" of responsibilities, such as housing and exploitation of natural resources (which could be managed more efficiently and effectively by the established Aboriginal governing bodies). It was also noted that institutional governance had been created via the devolution of some service/program delivery responsibilities, but not autonomous governance in as many areas as desired.

What Is the Stakeholder Assessment of Progress? What Lessons Have Been Learned?

Municipal amalgamations, a newer trend in Canada, are occurring with the goal of achieving greater efficiency in service delivery. One stakeholder, however, sees the need for amalgamations to be complemented by stronger neighbourhood- and community-based associations and networks. In general there was recognition that more practical experience is needed in governance partnerships, particularly following the slate of municipal amalgamations.

Concerning the revamped municipal acts, broader adoption of this kind of legislation requires successful working examples, and contact between municipalities to cross-fertilize ideas and best practices. One stakeholder noted that city-to-city contacts are growing as the need to pass through traditional channels disappears. Cities are able to share governance experiences directly.

CHAPTER 6. INTERNATIONAL COOPERATION

6.1 INDICATORS

Priority 20. Enhance International Cooperation and Partnerships

The Canadian International Development Agency (CIDA), the federal government's principal official development assistance agency, funds urban-based development projects undertaken by a range of organizations. Table 6-1 provides rounded estimates of project spending by CIDA for urban-based international development projects active between 1997 - 1999.[8]

Details on CIDA's program, and on the work of the International Development Research Centre and other federal government agencies, are provided in Subsection 6.2. In addition, Canadian provinces and territories participate actively in development assistance activities, as outlined in Subsection 6.3.

Table 6-1: Canadian International Cooperation to Urban Areas (CIDA Project Budget in $CAD)

	1997-1999 Active Projects
Number of projects	109
Project budgets	$353,316,000
Number of countries	49

Local governments are also involved in international cooperation. The Federation of Canadian Municipalities (FCM) is the national voice of Canada's municipal governments, and strives to promote strong, effective and accountable municipal government. FCM's international program, with the support of increased CIDA funding since 1996, has involved over 100 Canadian municipalities. This program has included 40 partnerships linking Canadian municipalities with local governments in 15 countries in Africa, Southeast Asia and Latin America. In addition, some Canadian cities have extended cooperation on a purely bilateral basis. Of the cities for which data is presented in this report, Calgary, Montreal, and Vancouver have created linkages with "sister cities" in other countries. Such programs serve to promote academic, artistic, cultural and economic links between the Canadian city and its partner community.

Many other Canadian organizations are involved in international cooperation relating to habitat issues, often in collaboration with CIDA. Examples include the Canadian Urban Institute; the International Centre for Sustainable Cities; the Institute of Public Administration of Canada; the Canadian Institute of Planners; and NGOs such as Rooftops Canada, CARE Canada, and World

---

[8] Estimates are rounded from an illustrative list of urban-based projects from CIDA's website at www.acdi-cida.gc.ca/urban. Most of the project funds listed relate to projects that were active between 1997 and 1999, but include multi-year projects dating back to 1988 and project funding commitments up to 2004. Funds were for urban-based projects in Asia, Africa and the Middle East, the Americas, Central and Eastern Europe, and for multinational activities (Canadian Partnership and Multilateral Branches).

University Service of Canada (WUSC). A number of academic institutions are also involved, in particular universities in Toronto, Montreal, and Vancouver. Finally, numerous private sector companies participate in international cooperation initiatives, including planning, engineering, and consulting firms.

6.2 FEDERAL POLICIES, LEGISLATION, AND PROGRAMS

This subsection presents information on the activities of key federal government departments and agencies in the area of international cooperation.

Canadian International Development Agency (CIDA)	
CIDA implements a wide range of projects relating to sustainable development in urban settings. These activities aim to improve city management and the living conditions of populations in the selected urban areas. These areas can include large cities (metropolitan areas, administrative capitals, major cities), medium-sized and small towns (intermediate or secondary cities, including those located in rural areas) or the urban periphery (suburbs, shanty towns). An indicative list of 109 such projects, with total budgets in excess of C$350 million, is provided on the CIDA website at www.acdi-cida.gc.ca/urban (see also Table 6.1 above).	
Shaping the 21st Century	Since Istanbul, Canada and other OECD-DAC countries adopted a consensus target to reduce poverty by half by the year 2015. *Shaping the 21st Century* is a strategy for a global development partnership effort which aims to maximize the impact of aid, define achievable results, enhance public and political support for development assistance in donor countries, foster policy coherence, and serve as a basis for dialogue and coordination between donors and recipients at various levels. The "S21" commitments are consistent with the Istanbul declaration, emphasizing partnership, capacity development, and recognition that the developing country is the coordinator of their own development.
Statement on Sustainable Cities in an Urbanizing World	In 1998 CIDA released a *Statement on Sustainable Cities in An Urbanizing World*. This document identified how CIDA's six priorities support sustainable development of cities in developing countries, and build on the fundamentals of the Istanbul Declaration (the key elements of which are cited in the Statement). Since June 1996, multiple CIDA projects and programmes have begun to undertake activities that use this *Statement* as a guide. In the CIDA publication: *Indicative List of CIDA Funded Initiatives in Urban Settings*, there are multiple examples of CIDA funded initiatives that contribute to implementation of the Istanbul declaration and the Habitat Agenda. In each of the key areas (shelter, social development and poverty reduction, environmental sustainability, economic development and governance) excellent examples can be provided of Canada's international urban cooperation in support of the goals of the Istanbul declaration.
Coherence and collaboration among partners for urban cooperation and development	Following the 1996 Istanbul Summit, a series of meetings and learning fora have taken place across Canada to increase coherence and collaboration of Canadian partners involved in international urban cooperation. Greater efforts have been focussed on developmental value-added in ongoing cooperation with Canadian municipalities, associations, and educational institutions. Through contributions to the World Bank Institute (WBI), Canada has contributed significantly to the development of the WBI core course on Urban and City Management. Canada has increasingly participated in multilateral-bilateral cooperation efforts such as the World Bank/UNCHS Cities Alliance, which intends to broaden international cooperation in line with the Istanbul Declaration. New consortia of development partnerships involve municipalities, local government associations, universities and colleges, the private sector and other NGOs. A greater outreach effort with other Canadian Government Departments has also resulted in broader coherence and collaboration for sustainable urban development efforts.

Social Development Priorities	*The Social Development Priorities: A Framework for Action* sets out a five-year investment plan to bolster and strengthen international cooperation resources devoted to programming in the key areas of health and nutrition, basic education, HIV/AIDS and child protection. Gender equality is an integral part of all these priority areas.

<table>
<tr><th colspan="2">International Development Research Centre</th></tr>
<tr><td>Projects</td><td>The International Development Research Centre has supported a wide range of projects relating to the human settlements and the issues addressed by the Habitat Agenda. A selection of these initiatives is provided in <i>Technical Report 6: International Cooperation</i>, a background document prepared by Canada. For illustrative purposes, a selection of these projects is listed here:
• Housing Finance Policies and Markets in Kenya and Zambia
• Quality of Life in Urban Slums (India)
• Municipal Services Restructuring (South Africa)
• Urban Horticulture Technologies (Haiti)
• Urban Micro-Basin Management Model (Brazil)
• Public- Private Partnerships for Environmental Services (Latin America & Caribbean)
• Women Street Vendors in South Africa AND Women Street Vendors in Kenya
• Traditional Leaders and Local Governance in Social Policy (West and Southern Africa)
• Learning for Local Governance and Development (South Africa)
• Municipal Development Programme for Eastern and Southern Africa II</td></tr>
<tr><td>Lessons</td><td>Taken together, these projects provide a number of important lessons. Multi-stakeholder analysis, participatory policy-making, and policy implementation through effective governance provide robust approaches to development priorities. The projects played a key role in these areas, through training for and informing negotiations on policy design; monitoring and reporting on impacts; recommending adjustments to ongoing policies; and producing information for dissemination. Several of the projects enabled southern partners to assess the political context, introduce fairer collaboration processes, reveal local capacities and resources, and propose new ways to engage these capacities/resources. In these projects, privatization and public-private partnerships show mixed results, in many cases adversely affecting access, quality and equity. The projects also show that models which foster self-esteem and confidence are critical to sustained progress.</td></tr>
</table>

<table>
<tr><th colspan="2">Other Federal Departments</th></tr>
<tr><td colspan="2">Many federal government departments participate actively in international organizations (e.g. OECD, UNCTAD, APEC, FAO, UNEP, etc.), and are deeply involved in international agreements (e.g. multilateral environmental accords). Details on such international activity is beyond the scope of this report, but may be accessed via departmental websites (which may be found via the Canada Site at http://canada.gc.ca).</td></tr>
<tr><td>Status of Women Canada (SWC)</td><td>Internationally, Canada has been a strong and consistent supporter of women's human rights and gender equality in various international fora. Canada has played a key role in bringing issues, such as gender mainstreaming; the promotion, protection and mainstreaming of women's human rights; the elimination of violence against women; and increasing women's participation in decision-making, to the forefront of international discussions.</td></tr>
</table>

Industry Canada	*The Sustainable Cities Initiative* (SCI) is a multi-partner public/private initiative led by Industry Canada. SCI works in partnership with selected cities around the world to apply Canadian technology and expertise to priority urban sustainability problems, such as water-wastewater, transportation and neighbourhood revitalization. *Agreements:* Industry Canada has also signed 68 MOUs, agreements, and letters of intent relating to international cooperation in such areas as: environmental issues, development issues, E-commerce, and access to education and health via the internet.
Statistics Canada	Statistics Canada has regularly contributed to national reports for international agencies such as the United Nations. The agency has provided much of the indicator data which forms the basis of this report and six related Technical Reports.
Environment Canada	*Bilateral Relationships:* Environment Canada (EC) maintains bilateral relationships for the exchange of environmental information and technology with approximately 20 countries, many of these in the South. *Capacity Building*: In support of Canada's participation in multilateral environmental agreements, capacity building assistance is often made available to developing countries, with financial support through CIDA. *The City Solutions Network:* Following an APEC commitment made by the Minister of the Environment in 1997, EC has been working with partners in CIDA, the World Bank and urban focussed NGOs to develop a Website for urban decision-makers focussed on urban environmental management issues. *Application of EMS Principles to Urban Management*: EC has developed a workshop on application of environmental management principles to urban management, and has presented the workshop internationally. At the request of UNEP, this course is now being developed into a comprehensive package for municipalities.
CMHC	In response to demand from both emerging export markets as well as other developing regions of the world, CMHC is involved in projects aimed at promoting Canadian housing practices and finance systems. Such projects are developed as a result of co-operative agreements, follow-up to current government-to-government initiatives, and in response to projects proposed by International Financing Institutions and/or CIDA.

6.3 PROVINCIAL POLICIES, LEGISLATION, AND PROGRAMS

This subsection presents information on activities by provincial and territorial governments in the area of international cooperation. Canadian provinces and territories participate actively in international affairs. They play an important role in Canada's involvement in various international agencies and multi-lateral or bilateral agreements. They participate with the federal government in export promotion activities. Most provinces cooperate with neighbouring states in the USA on issues of common interest, both informally and through formal arrangements (for instance, agreements between the New England Governors and the Eastern Canadian Premiers).

In addition, the provinces and territories also participate in development assistance activities, principally with funding from CIDA, and sometimes through a more direct relationship with partners in another country. The following list provides a small sample of such activities:

- *Canada/South Africa Governance Support and Provincial Twinning Project*: This project supports the governance capacity of South African provinces through twinning arrangements with the executive public services of Canadian provinces. The project has assisted the Republic of South Africa to strengthen its capacity for governance and effective delivery of government programs addressing basic human needs. CIDA provides funding and the Institute of Public Administration of Canada is project administrator.

- *Youth for Health Project (Ukraine)*: This project applies Saskatchewan health promotion expertise to improve the health of youth in the Ukraine. Main areas of focus are AIDS prevention, smoking cessation, and reduction in drug/alcohol abuse. Partners are CIDA (funding), Canadian Society for International Health (project administrator), and Ukrainian National Ministry of Education.

- *Good Governance and Rural Economic Development (Poland)*: This initiative is a five-year co-operative agreement, launched in 1999, between the province of Prince Edward Island and the Polish province of Swietokrzyszkie.

- *International Sister States Relationship*: The State of Jalisco in Mexico and the Province of Alberta have agreed to a "Protocol of Understanding and Friendship for a Sister Relationship", and have signed a letter of agreement for economic cooperation. This agreement has included a two-week exchange of department officials, and a mission from Jalisco involving more than 100 Mexican participants. Negotiations are underway for agreements with other Mexican states.

- *International Governance Office*: The Alberta Government has established an International Governance Office within the Ministry of International and Intergovernmental Relations. The office participates in international governance projects in developing countries, usually with funding from CIDA or other international financial institutions. The office focuses on projects that deal with capacity building in the public sector.

6.4 STAKEHOLDER PERSPECTIVES

This subsection presents a synthesis of the views of selected Canadian stakeholders on international cooperation issues. Further details on these perspectives are provided in the *Technical Reports* and appendices prepared by Canada. A list of stakeholders interviewed is provided in Appendix A.

What Are the Most Important Agenda-related Issues for Canadian Stakeholders?

The international cooperation issues identified by stakeholders centred around the links between poverty reduction and community development, democratization, shelter, security of tenure and gender equality. It was further noted by one stakeholder that the Habitat Agenda called for 0.7% of GNP to be devoted to official development assistance, whereas Canada spends less than half of this target.

How Pro-active Have Governments Been Furthering the Agenda?

The overall sense from stakeholders is that Canada has been proactive in international cooperation as it relates to the Habitat Agenda. There is a unit within CIDA that is working positively on shelter issues, and Canada is a partner in the Cities Alliance, with the World Bank, UNCHS and a number of other country donors. Stakeholders also supported Industry Canada's Sustainable Cities initiative, and the support the Métis receive from the Department of Foreign Affairs and International Trade (DFAIT) to attend international conferences was recognized. One stakeholder also noted a positive trend within Canadian agencies working in international cooperation on shelter issues – the recognition that they need to work as partners with each other, with Canadian municipalities, and with good, long-term partners in the target country.

However, some stakeholders also expressed concerns, noting a number of specific issues. The first was that DFAIT withdrew from the UN Commission on Human Settlements in 1996. Second, two stakeholders noted that no on-going consultative or monitoring processes were established to follow the implementation of the Habitat Agenda in Canada. Third, one stakeholder noted that Canada had been especially silent on the issue of security of tenure in its ODA work, and another suggested that the human rights of indigenous peoples needed to be promoted at the international level. Finally, concern was raised regarding the export promotion focus by CMHC, where relations with middle- to upper-level income countries are emphasized.

What Is the Stakeholder Assessment of Progress? What Lessons Have Been Learned?

Progress has been achieved through Canadian ODA efforts: projects reflect partners' ideas and ideals and have achieved good results. However, while CIDA's new Social Development Agenda for ODA allows for links to housing/ urbanization through health and education priorities, neither housing nor shelter is mentioned explicitly in the Agenda. In relation to gender equality, there is limited CIDA programming for women and housing. Moreover, it was felt that there is need to build awareness on urbanization issues at a broader level within CIDA, as well as to dedicate specific resources to this area. Finally, one stakeholder noted the distinction between housing and urban affairs/design, and felt the absence of an urban affairs focus at the federal level weakens Canada's capability and credibility to work in this area internationally.

With respect to successful international shelter/urban issues projects, stakeholder input suggests that the most effective are those that support Canadian partners working together; that engage the least advantaged people in the process; that build trust through the development of human relationships; and that ensure all actors are involved. The importance of building bridges between sectors that may not historically have communicated was noted, as was the issue of better understanding of sustainability and its implications for quality of life and future generations.

APPENDIX A:

STAKEHOLDERS INTERVIEWED

APPENDIX A. STAKEHOLDERS INTERVIEWED

The following is a list of stakeholder groups interviewed during preparation of this report. Many of the views expressed during these interviews are included in the Stakeholders Perspectives sections of this report. Note, however, that not all stakeholders spoke to all topics covered in this report; rather they spoke to the topics of most interest to their organizations.

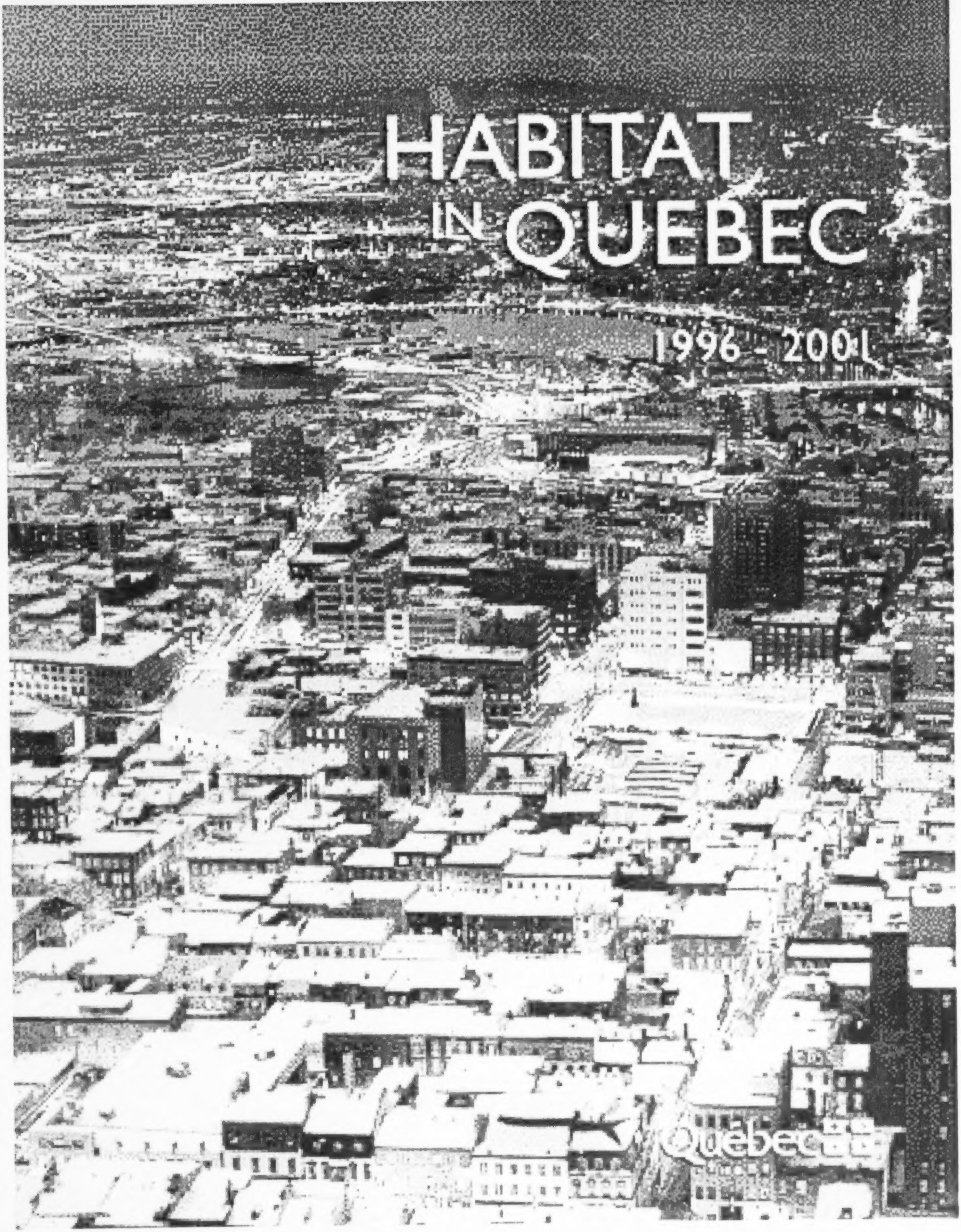
- Assembly of First Nations
- Canadian Environmental Network
- Canadian Housing and Renewal Association
- Canadian Home Builders Association
- Canadian Urban Institute
- Centre for Urban & Community Studies, University of Toronto
- Centre for Property Studies, University of New Brunswick
- Centre for Human Settlements, University of British Columbia
- Congress of Aboriginal Peoples
- Cooperative Housing Federation
- Federation of Canadian Municipalities
- GROOTS Canada
- Habitat for Humanity Canada
- INRS - Urbanization, Université de Montréal
- Institute of Urban Studies, University of Winnipeg
- International Centre for Sustainable Cities
- Inuit Tapirisat of Canada
- Métis National Council
- Native Women's Association of Canada
- Rooftops Canada Foundation

ANNEX:

PROVINCIAL REPORTS: QUÉBEC

HABITAT IN QUEBEC

1996 - 2001



Québec

The following government departments and agencies were involved
in drafting and approving the text:

Ministère des Affaires municipales et de la Métropole
Ministère de l'Emploi et de la Solidarité sociale
Ministère de l'Environnement
Ministère de la Famille et de l'Enfance
Ministère des Relations internationales
Secrétariat à la condition féminine
Secrétariat à la jeunesse
Secrétariat du Comité ministériel du développement social, ministère du Conseil exécutif

Coordination and production:

Société d'habitation du Québec

We thank the cities of Hull, Montreal and Québec for their valuable cooperation
with certain portions of the report.

Graphic design:nj communication

Translation: Alpha traduction et interprétation inc.

Front cover: The Saint-Roch neighbourhood of Québec City in winter; photo: Brigitte Ostiguy - L'imagier
Back cover: The Saint-Roch neighbourhood of Québec City in summer; photo: Jean-Charles Paradis - L'imagier

Special thanks to Pierre Lahoud for his superb aerial photographs

ISBN 2-550-37481-9
Legal deposit – Bibliothèque nationale du Québec 2001
Legal deposit – National Library of Canada 2001
© Gouvernement du Québec

Photo : Serge Côté - L'Image

The blue iris (*Iris Versicolor Linné*), Québec's floral emblem

HABITAT IN QUÉBEC

A Report by Québec for the period 1996-2001, presented at the
Special Session of the United Nations General Assembly
for an Overall Review and Appraisal of the Implementation
of the Habitat Agenda *(Istanbul + 5)*

The Parliament of Québec - Religion and Homeland

A MESSAGE FROM THE QUÉBEC GOVERNMENT

In 1996, at the Second United Nations Conference on Human Settlements, *Habitat II*, Québec presented a report in which it expressed its support for universal objectives aimed at guaranteeing access to suitable housing and creating safer, healthier, fairer and more viable human settlements. It also confirmed its commitment to improve habitat and increase solidarity with the poorly housed.

As the international community meets again to assess the progress made since 1996, Québec is proud to add its voice to those of the nations by presenting its own review.

In Québec, clear progress has been made over the last five years in the habitat sector. In particular, this period has seen the development of an undeniable collective generosity in the form of an ever-increasing number of social and economic development partnerships. Indeed, the government's actions have been echoed by the emergence of a particularly inspiring form of social economy.

Local communities and habitat naturally overlap. The Québec government, while reinforcing urban areas, has therefore renewed its support for municipal and community initiatives aimed at meeting changing housing needs and revitalizing older city neighbourhoods. Local authorities have innovated to make living environments safer, better suited to the needs of women, and more welcoming for families of all types. They have also innovated to generate active participation from citizens of all ages and all origins.

In its efforts to eliminate poverty and exclusion, Québec intends to consolidate and strengthen means of ensuring the right to housing. It also intends to respect its environmental commitments. More than ever before, the government hopes to work with its municipal partners – and with civil society as a whole – to develop a comprehensive strategy for habitat that will incorporate the social, economic and environmental aspects of sustainable development.

This is why it is important for us to share our experience with the other nations and to add our voice to the choir of diversity.

Minister of State for International Relations

Louise Beaudoin

LOUISE BEAUDOIN

Minister of State for Municipal Affairs and Greater Montreal

Louise Harel

LOUISE HAREL

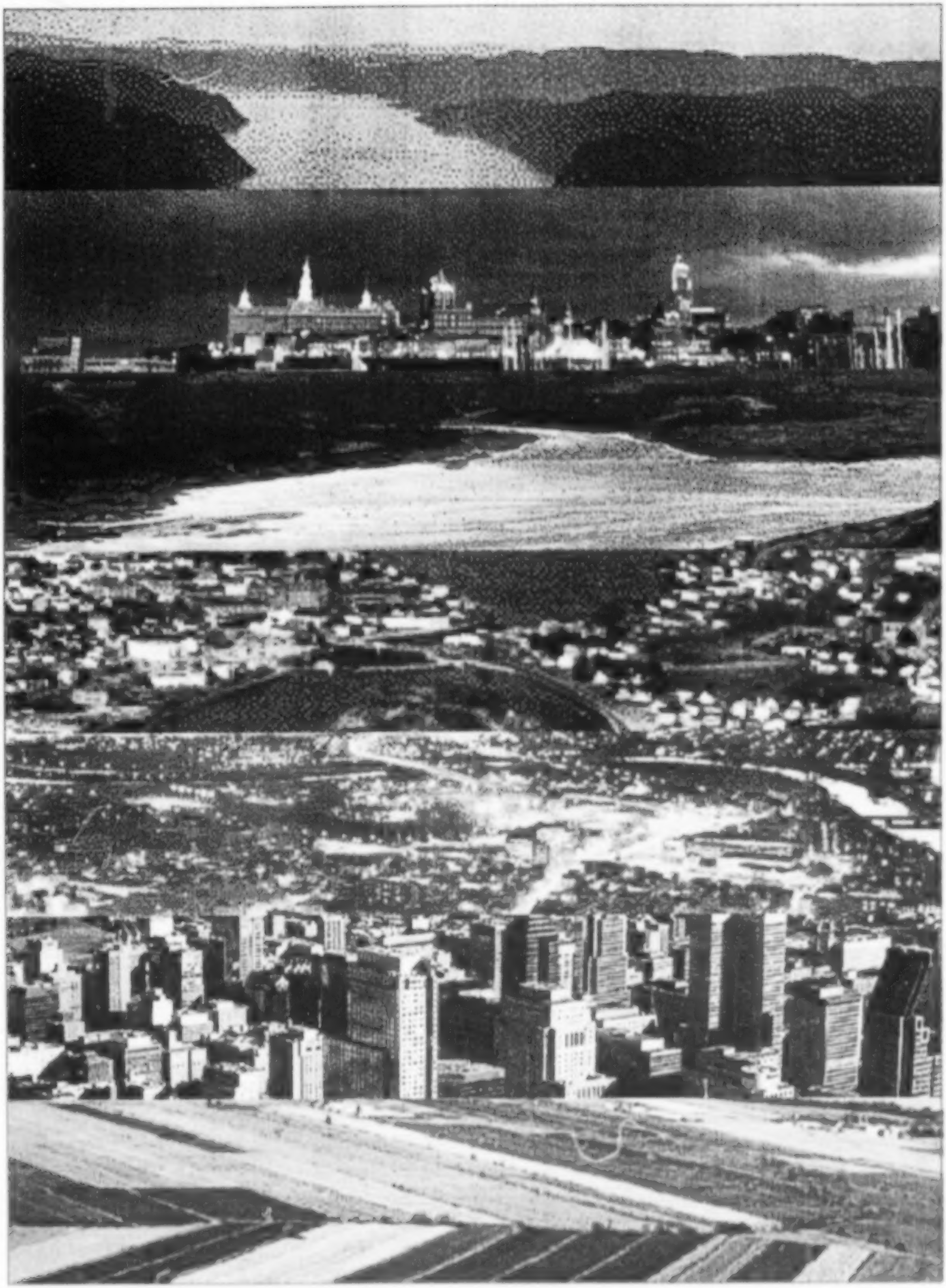


TABLE OF CONTENTS

INTRODUCTION 7

THE CONTEXT IN QUÉBEC 9
A Brief Overview 9
Government Organization in the Habitat Sector: Shared Responsibilities 13

THE HOUSING ISSUE 17
Access to Housing 17
Housing Improvement and Adaptation 22

COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT AND ELIMINATION OF POVERTY 29
Sharing the Fruits of Development 29
Family Living Environments 35
Safety in the Cities 36
Economic Development and Employment 38

VIABLE CITY AND VILLAGE ENVIRONMENTS 43
The Challenges and Instruments of Sustainable Development 43
Natural Resource Development and the Fight Against Pollution 48
Towards Sustainable Management of Living Environments 54

GOVERNANCE AND PARTNERSHIP 61
Strengthening Local Institutions 61
Civic Participation 65
Public, Private and Community Partnerships 66

INTERNATIONAL COOPERATION AND INTERNATIONAL PARTNERS 69
International Cooperation 69
International Exchanges 70

GENERAL PROSPECTS: DEVELOPING A SUSTAINABLE HABITAT 75

APPENDIX 79
International Pacts and Covenants by which Québec has declared itself bound 79

REFERENCES 80

QUÉBEC: SOME FIGURES

LAND AREA

Total area	1,667,926 km^2	
Land area	1,496,400 km^2	(80% of total area)
Agricultural and urban zones	33,514 km^2	(22% of total area)

THE POPULATION

Total population of Québec	1996:	7,138,795
	2000:	7,372,448 (estimated)
Population by gender	Women:	51.1%
	Men:	48.9%
Population by age	Under 24:	31.3%
	65 and over:	12.1%
Population density	4.7 inhabitants/km^2	

HOUSING

Number of households (occupied dwellings)	2,822,030	
Percentage of owner-occupiers by gender of household maintainer	Women:	41.3%
	Men:	65.5%
	Combined:	56.5%
Average number of people per household	2.5	
Average number of people per room	0.44	
Types of dwelling	Single family homes (detached):	45.1%
	Small buildings:	49.8%
	Buildings, 5 stories or more:	5.1%
Year constructed	Before 1946:	16.2%
	After 1980:	26.3%
Main heating fuel (1998)	Electricity:	68.2%
	Gas:	7.8%
	Oil:	16.7%
	Wood and other:	7.3%

Sources: Statistics Canada and Institut de la statistique du Québec (*1996 data unless otherwise indicated*)

INTRODUCTION

"Sustainable development is a form of development that meets current needs without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their needs." (Brundtland Report, World Commission on Environment and Development, 1987)

"Sustainable development improves the living conditions of communities while remaining within the bounds of ecosystem capacities." (World Conservation Union, United Nations Environment Program, World Wide Fund for Nature, 1991)

Twenty-five years ago, the United Nations' First Conference on Human Settlements provided an opportunity to review shelter-related issues and to start preparing common policies. Even then, the emphasis was on the need for better local structures and a fairer division of resources between the different levels of government.

In 1996, the United Nations' Second Conference on Human Settlements (*Habitat II*), also known as the City Summit, endorsed the principle of adequate housing for all within a framework of safe, healthy, viable, fair, sustainable and productive human settlements. An action program known as the *Habitat Agenda* was adopted at the Conference with the aim of mobilizing energies throughout the world. The basic goal was to establish the strategies required to meet the challenges of the 21st century, when more than half the world's population is expected to live in cities following rapid urbanization of living environments.

In June 2001, just five years later, the United Nations General Assembly is holding a special session to consider and assess the implementation of the *Habitat Agenda*. Many questions will be raised during this exercise. What have we achieved so far? Does every human being have a home? Do communities provide healthy environments conducive to the fulfilment and well-being of present and future generations? Is the population involved in the planning of their community? What are the most important achievements so far? Are experiences being shared and discussed throughout the world? And in broader terms, what progress can we expect in the third millennium, and what are the prospects for human settlements?

As part of its preparation for the event, the United Nations Centre for Human Settlements invited countries to review their progress in applying the *Habitat Agenda* at the national and local levels. This report was prepared in response to that invitation.It illustrates Québec's experience in the habitat sector and describes the approaches and techniques that have produced the best results,especially in the period since 1996.

The report begins with a short overview of the current situation in Québec, and then considers the various aspects of habitat from the standpoint of sustainable urban development. It reviews the progress made since *Habitat II*, describing the approaches applied and actions taken in the fields of housing, economic and social development, environmental management, governance and the development of international exchanges.

All these aspects affect every member of Québec society, men and women alike. Actions aimed more specifically at women have been included under the general subject headings. The report concludes with a list of Québec's principal habitat-related commitments and discusses future prospects.

THE CONTEXT IN QUÉBEC

A BRIEF OVERVIEW

Québec's land and population

Québec extends from the St. Lawrence River plain to the Hudson Strait, and 70% of its total area is located in northern zones. With a territory of some 1.7 million km^2, it is three times the size of France and five times the size of Japan. In the more southerly regions,where most of the inhabited zones are located, hardwood and mixed forests abound. Further north, the vegetation is dominated by a softwood forest of gradually diminishing density. The extreme north, with its harsh Arctic climate, is characterized by tundra vegetation.

The majority of Québec's total population of 7.4 million people are French-speaking. English-speakers, mainly of British origin, number nearly 600,000 and live mostly in the Greater Montreal area. The 72,400 Aboriginal people, including 63,800 Amerindians and 8,600 Inuit, are descendants of North America's first inhabitants. Every year, Québec welcomes approximately 25,000 immigrants from a hundred countries. Since the beginning of the 20th century, some 700,000 immigrants from Europe, Africa, South America and Asia have come to live in Québec.

Socio-demographic development

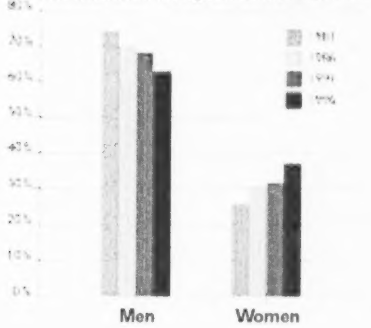
Generally speaking, Québec's demographic, social and economic situation is consistent with that of most developed countries. Its most notable aspects include a significantly ageing population, the predominance of generations born after the Second World War, and growing percentages of people living alone and single-parent families headed mainly by women. The number of households supported by women grew by 33% in ten years, accounting for 37% of all households in Québec in 1996.

Québec's family structure has undergone numerous changes over the last two decades. The range of family models has increased, and family environments and structures have also changed. A drop in birth rates and the ensuing reduction in family size are examples of these changes. The percentage of families with three or more minor children fell from 28% in 1975 to 14.6% in 1996. The massive arrival of mothers in the labour market has also had a significant impact on family lifestyles. In 1976, 28.7% of mothers with children under three years of age had jobs. Twenty years later, the figure had more than doubled, to 62%.

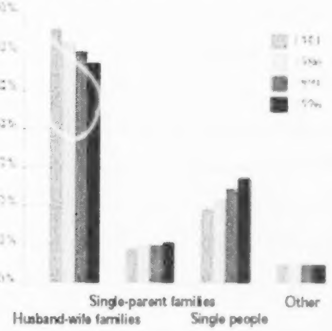
Concentration of the population in urban areas

Québec's relatively slow population growth in the last thirty years has been distributed unevenly in geographical terms. Urban areas have grown more than isolated rural regions, and population levels in some of this latter group have actually declined. In the metropolitan regions, urban growth has tended to be stronger in communities located on the outskirts of cities.

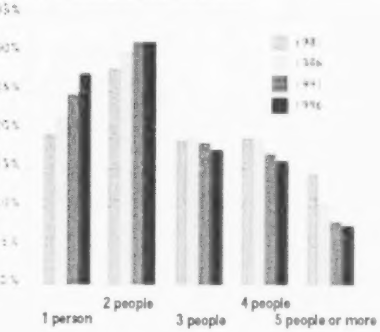
In 2000, nearly 80% of Québec's total population lived in six urban areas with more than 100,000 inhabitants each, namely Montreal, Québec City, Outaouais, Chicoutimi-Jonquière, Sherbrooke and Trois-Rivières, and in 25 urban areas with between 10,000 and 100,000 inhabitants each. Urban areas play a preponderant role in economic development, accounting for 85% of all jobs in Québec.



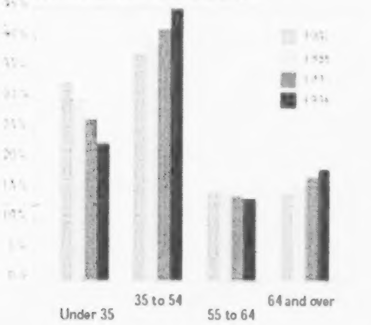
Changes in the gender of household maintainer in Québec households



Changes in household type in Québec



Changes in the size of Québec households



Changes in the ages of household maintainers in Québec

The economic and social context

Québec's economy is equivalent in size to that of some European countries, such as Switzerland, Austria, Sweden and Denmark. Its economic structure is industrialized and modern. Like all industrialized countries, Québec has undergone some significant changes in recent decades.

In addition to the transformation of its economic structure as a whole, Québec has witnessed changes in some of its activity sectors. All have had as their common denominator the fact of steering Québec towards what is commonly known as the "new economy". Industries that were traditionally the motors of economic growth have given way to others whose success is based on knowledge and innovation rather than mass production. In this new context, science and technology play a vital role in the process of economic growth, and manufacturing activity is shifting toward the high technology sectors.

The recession of the early 1990s, combined with certain demographic changes, had the effect of weakening domestic demand, maintaining significant social needs and enhancing the housing-related problems of vulnerable groups. However, following vigorous economic growth in the last few years, the phenomenon of impoverishment is now declining among some of these groups. This new prosperity has brought unemployment rates down to levels unheard-of since 1976, and has also produced a 33% reduction over the last five years in the number of employable households receiving income security. Even so, in 1997, approximately 10% of all individuals and 13% of all households were living below the low income measure recognized by Québec[1].

In view of this, the Québec government is focusing more than ever on a goal of social development and the fight against poverty, to ensure that all members of society are able to benefit from the products of development. Actions taken to help achieve this goal have included the appointment of a Minister for the Elimination of Poverty and Exclusion, and government authorities have also been mandated to adopt a joint comprehensive approach to the problem of poverty.

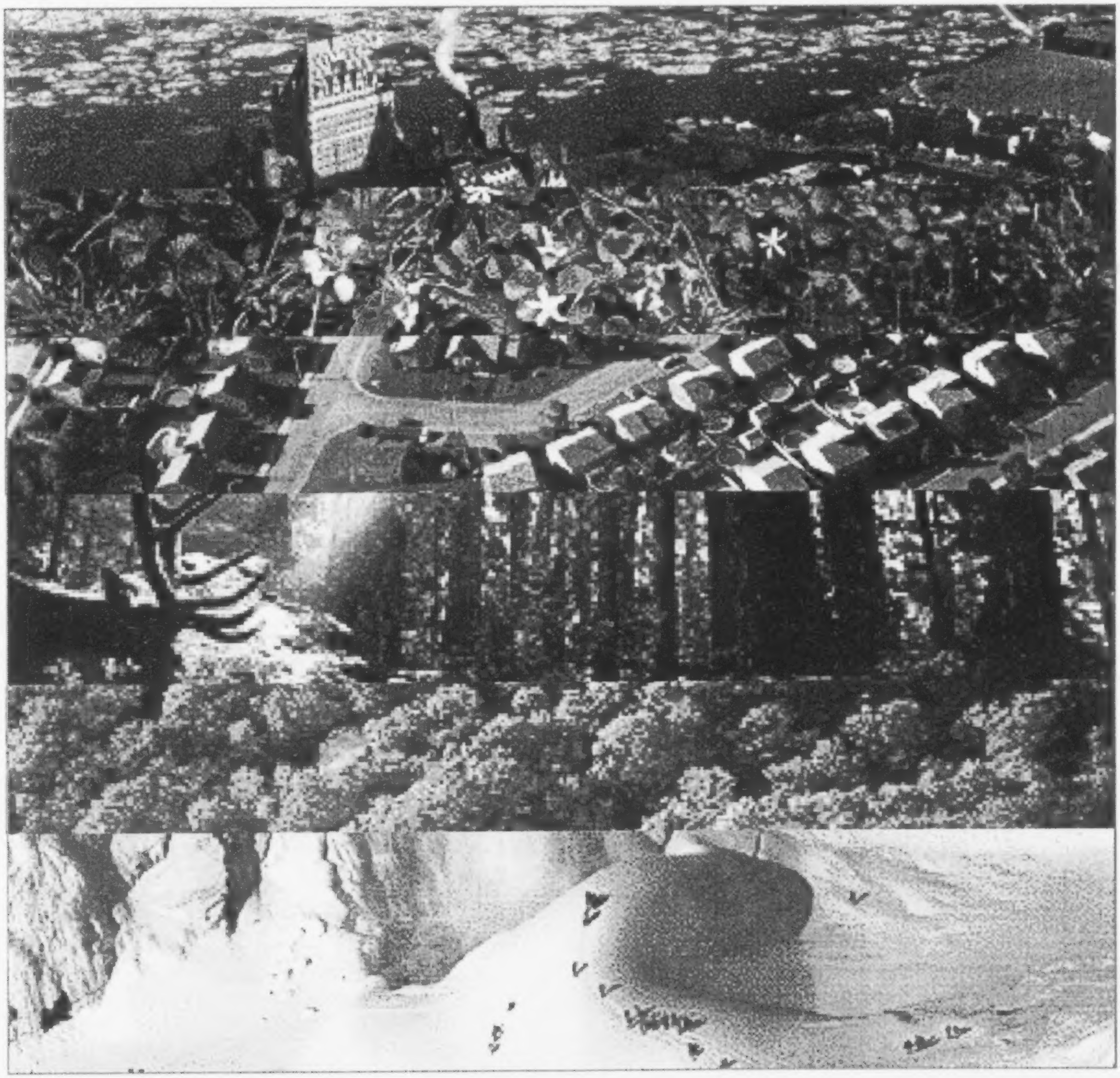
---

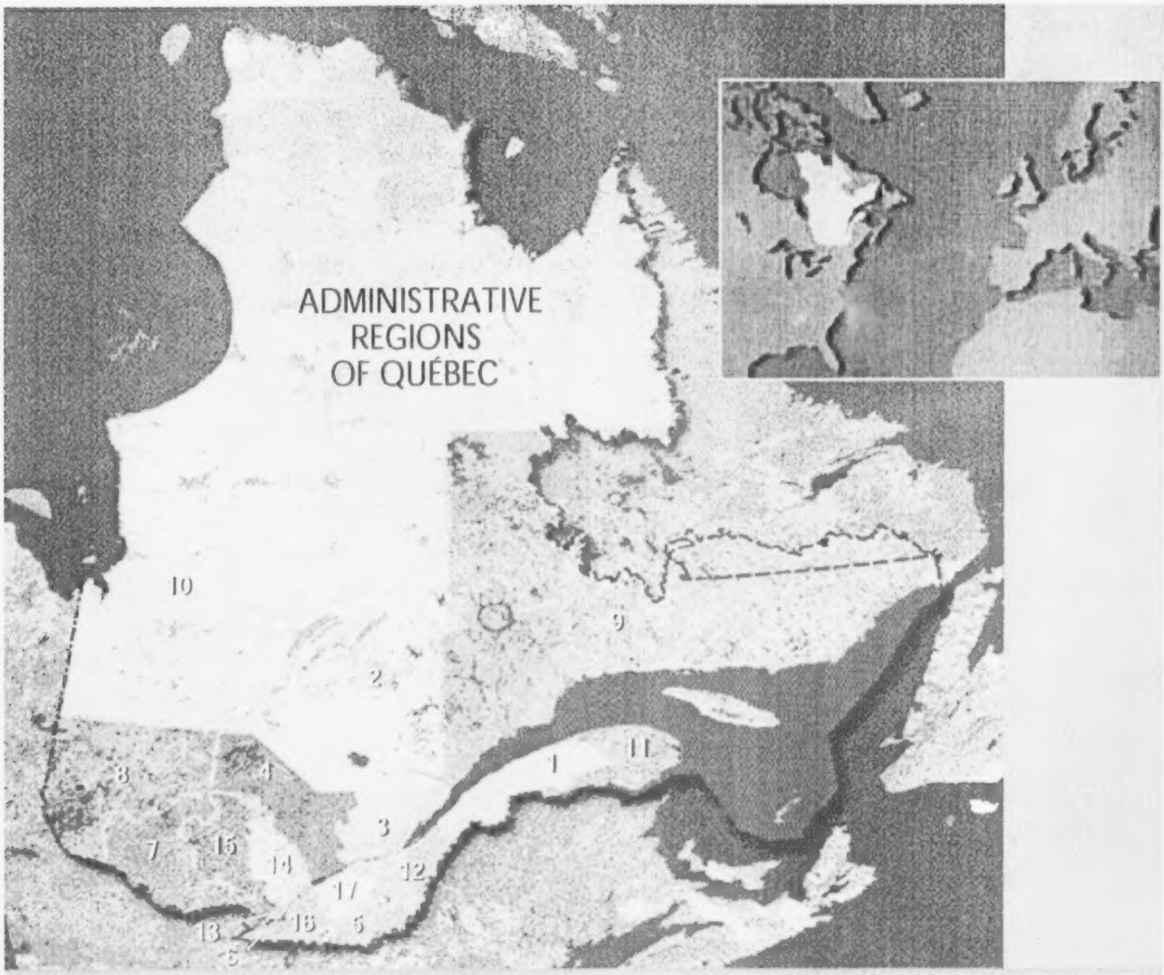
[1] This is the after-tax low income measure established for Québec by Statistics Canada. This measure, recognized by the OECD, corresponds to half the median income adjusted for family size.

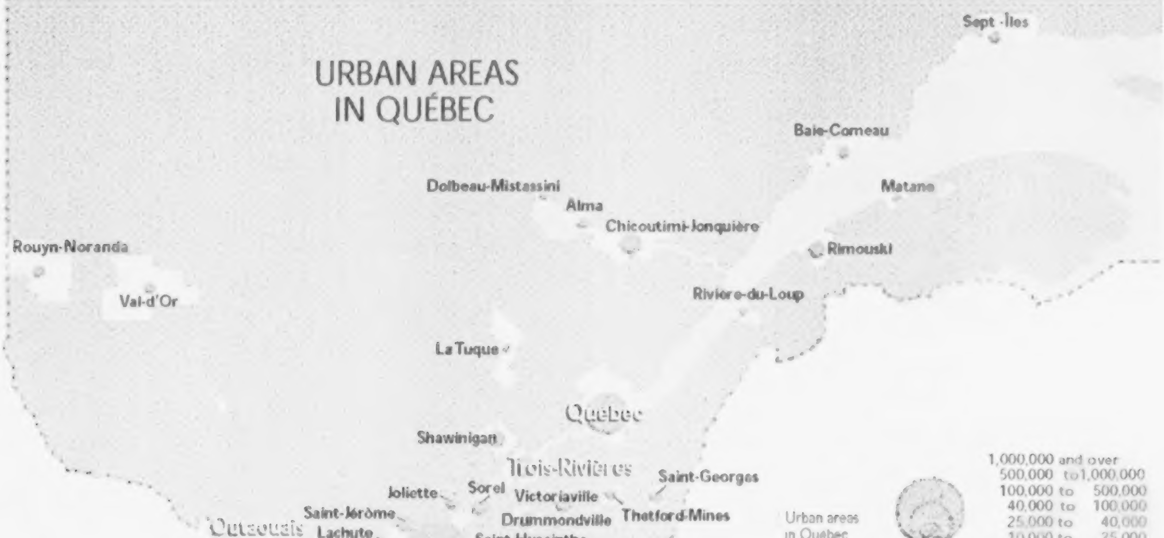
Québec's Climate

The vast area covered by Québec is subject to climatic conditions that differ significantly from north to south and east to west, depending on latitude, topography and the maritime influence. Average temperatures range from 5 to 20°C in the summer and from -10 to -25°C in the winter. Winter lasts from five to eight months, depending on the region.

South of the 50th parallel, the climate is of the temperate continental type, characterized by hot summers, cold winters and abundant annual precipitation levels averaging 900 mm. The area between the 50th and 58th parallels has a sub-Arctic climate characterized by shorter, cooler summers, lower precipitation levels and longer, colder winters. The extreme north has an Arctic climate with severe winters, a short thaw and continuous permafrost. The eastern regions, dominated by the St. Lawrence gulf and estuary, have a maritime climate.




ADMINISTRATIVE
REGIONS
OF QUÉBEC
10
9
2
1
11
8
4
3
7
15
14
12
17
13
16
5
6


URBAN AREAS
IN QUÉBEC
Sept -Îles
Baie-Comeau
Matane
Dolbeau-Mistassini
Alma
Chicoutimi-Jonquière
Rimouski
Rouyn-Noranda
Val-d'Or
Rivière-du-Loup
La Tuque
Québec
Shawinigan
Trois-Rivières
Saint-Georges
Joliette
Sorel
Victoriaville
Saint-Jérôme
Drummondville
Thetford-Mines
Outaouais
Lachute
Saint-Hyacinthe
Montreal
Granby
Sherbrooke
Salaberry-de-Valleyfield
Saint-Jean-sur-Richelieu
Cowansville
Magog
Urban areas
in Québec
1,000,000 and over
500,000 to 1,000,000
100,000 to 500,000
40,000 to 100,000
25,000 to 40,000
10,000 to 25,000

Source Ministère des Affaires municipales et de la Metropole

GOVERNMENT ORGANIZATION IN THE HABITAT SECTOR: SHARED RESPONSIBILITIES

Administrative organization

Québec is subdivided into 17 administrative regions, each with its own territory. The geographical size, resources and climates of these regions differ considerably. For example, the Nord-du-Québec region covers an area of 839,696 km^2 and has only 39,450 inhabitants, while the Island of Montreal region has 1,825,000 inhabitants in an area of just 499 km^2.

Each region has a *Regional Development Board*, at least one-third of which is composed of representatives from municipalities and other community bodies. The boards are mainly responsible for coordinating regional initiatives and managing the funds granted to them under regional development agreements with the government.

The Administrative Regions of Québec

		Number of Households	Density (inhab./km^2)
1	Bas-Saint-Laurent	78,365	9.2
2	Saguenay – Lac-Saint-Jean	104,265	2.8
3	Capitale-Nationale	262,290	33.5
4	Mauricie	107,500	6.7
5	Estrie	111,505	28.4
6	Montréal	773,395	3,620.7
7	Outaouais	118,270	9.6
8	Abitibi-Témiscamingue	58,785	2.4
9	Côte-Nord	37,670	0.4
10	Nord-du-Québec	11,115	0.1
11	Gaspésie – Îles-de-la-Madeleine	38,280	5.1
12	Chaudière-Appalaches	140,195	25.7
13	Laval	123,650	1,397.6
14	Lanaudière	136,445	29.0
15	Laurentides	164,380	21.3
16	Montérégie	473,675	116.3
17	Centre-du-Québec	82,185	31.6

Sources: Statistics Canada and Institut de la statistique du Québec, 1996

Organization of municipal authorities

Québec is one of the ten member states of the Canadian federation. The British North America Act, which created Canada in 1867,instituted two levels of government, one federal and the other provincial. Under the Canadian constitution, Québec has several exclusive legislative jurisdictions, including full jurisdiction to create municipal institutions and grant the powers and funding they need to function.

In January 2001, Québec had 1,288 *local municipalities*, 64% of which had less than 2,000 inhabitants. At the regional level, the municipalities are grouped into 96 *regional county municipalities* and three *urban communities* (Montreal, Québec City and Outaouais). The municipal authorities exercise their powers exclusively in certain fields and share responsibility with the Québec government in others. They cover the vast majority of Québec's population but just one-third of its total geographical area; this is because most Québecers live in the more southerly regions.

A further characteristic of Québec is the existence (north of the 55th parallel) of the territory of Nunavik, which has a municipal network composed of 14 Inuit municipalities and one Naskapi village. The municipalities are grouped together to form a regional body known as the Kativik Regional Government. Most of Québec's regions also have their own Amerindian populations. The Amerindians enjoy special status and their local administrative structures are governed by Canadian legislation.

The remaining area of Québec consists of a series of unorganized territories with no local government structures. They are administered by regional county municipalities, and their total population numbers just 2,500.

Québec's local government structures will be modified significantly in the coming years. An extensive municipal reform aimed at strengthening urban areas and regional county municipalities is currently being implemented. The reform will considerably reduce the number of municipalities and will abolish the current structure of urban communities, replacing them with single cities divided into boroughs, together with two *metropolitan communities* covering the two largest urban areas, Montreal and Québec City.

PRINCIPAL QUÉBEC GOVERNMENT DEPARTMENTS AND AGENCIES INVOLVED IN THE HABITAT SECTOR

The Ministère des Affaires municipales et de la Métropole oversees relations between the government and local authorities, and as part of its responsibilities it supervises and supports many aspects of habitat that fall mainly under local authority, including land use planning and urban infrastructures. It is also responsible for coordinating development in the Greater Montreal area.

The Ministère de la Culture et des Communications administers legislation and resources related to heritage enhancement.

The Ministère de l'Emploi et de la Solidarité sociale is responsible for income security programs and public employment services.

The Ministère de l'Environnement is responsible for protecting the environment with a view to achieving sustainable development.

The Ministère de la Famille et de l'Enfance is responsible for developing and implementing the family policy.

The Ministère de la Santé et des Services sociaux oversees funding and ensures that health services are available throughout Québec. It is also responsible for providing social services to people who need them.

The Régie du bâtiment du Québec controls vocational training and accreditation for building contractors and oversees warranty plans in the housing sector.

The Régie du logement supervises relations between owners and tenants,in particular by informing them of their respective rights and obligations. Where necessary, it settles disputes.

The Société d'habitation du Québec is the agency responsible for housing policies and programs and is also the Québec government's main housing advisor. It manages the largest residential housing stock in Québec.

Several Secretariats work with specific client groups and are responsible for specific habitat-related issues. They include the **Secrétariat à l'action communautaire autonome**, the **Secrétariat à la condition féminine**, the **Secrétariat aux aînés**, the **Secrétariat à la jeunesse** and the **Secrétariat aux affaires autochtones**.

Other government departments and agencies are also involved in a more general way in the habitat sector. They include the **Ministère de la Sécurité publique**, the **Ministère de l'Agriculture, des Pêcheries et de l'Alimentation**, the **Ministère des Ressources naturelles**, the **Ministère des Régions**, and the **Ministère des Transports**.

DIVISION OF RESPONSIBILITY BETWEEN THE QUÉBEC GOVERNMENT AND MUNICIPAL AUTHORITIES

ACTIVITY SECTOR		RESPONSIBILITY	
		Québec Govt.	Municipal Authorities
HEALTH AND SOCIAL SERVICES	• Hospitals • Health care • Social services		
SOCIAL WELFARE	• Income security • Public employment services		
HOUSING	• Housing improvement • Social housing assistance • Regulations		
EDUCATION	• Elementary and secondary education • Higher education • Educational daycare services		
TRANSPORTATION	• Highways and main road system • City streets • Rural roads • Public transportation in the cities • Roadside lighting		
PUBLIC PROTECTION	• Police • Fire protection • Emergency measures		
ENVIRONMENT AND PUBLIC HYGIENE	• Air purification • Drinking water quality standards • Water supplies • Sewers and drainage • Protection of biodiversity • Waste water treatment • Waste management		
RECREATION AND CULTURE	• Libraries, museums • Exhibitions and fairs • Parks and natural spaces • Recreational activities, leisure and playing fields • Cultural and heritage properties		
URBAN PLANNING AND TERRITORIAL DEVELOPMENT	• Land use planning • Urban planning program and zoning by-laws • Economic development		
LOCAL FINANCE AND TAXATION	• Real estate valuation • Budget • Loans • Purchase of goods and services		

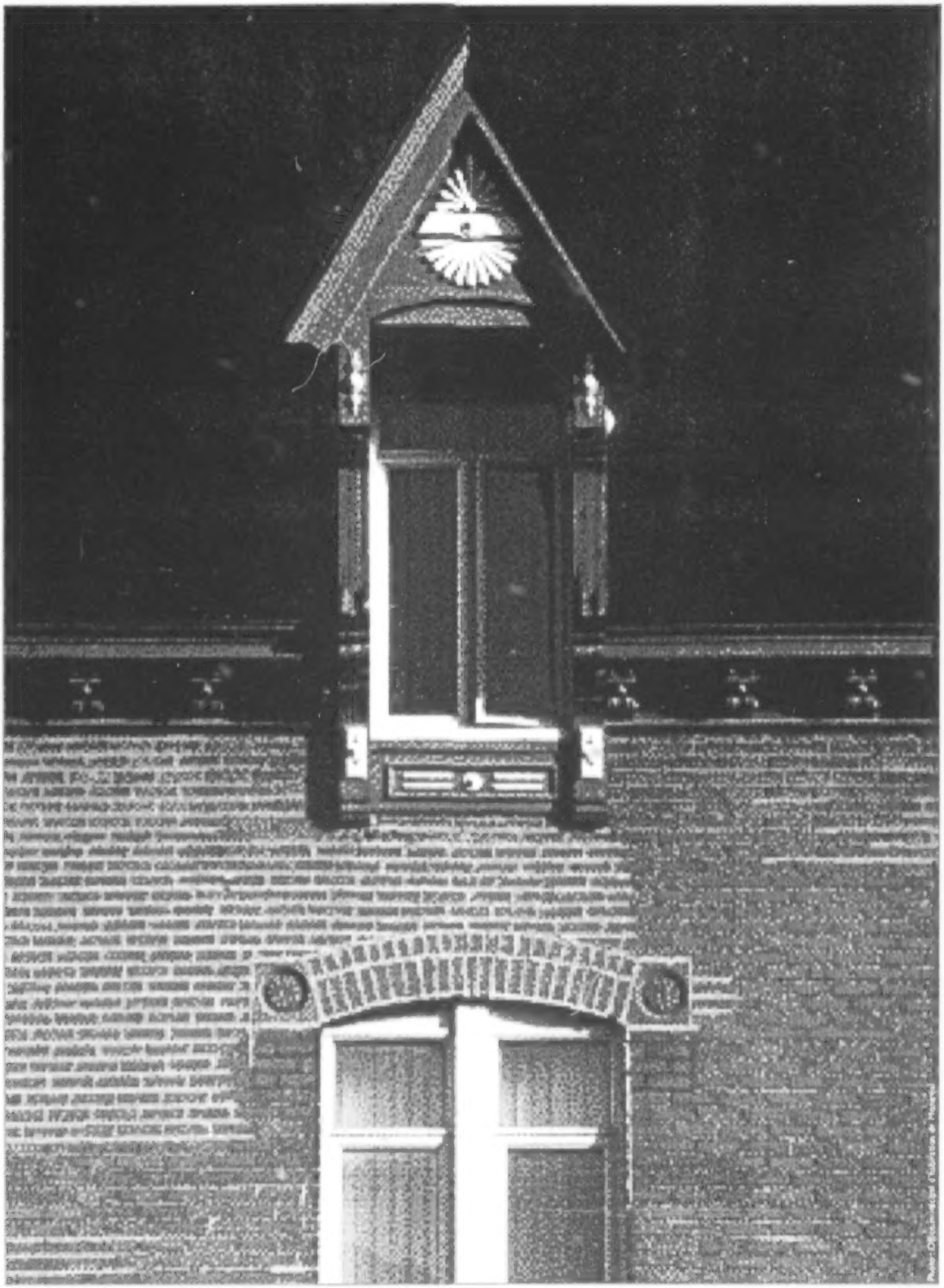


Photo : Office municipal d'habitation de Montréal

THE HOUSING ISSUE

ACCESS TO HOUSING

Security of tenure and the right to housing: a social entitlement

The vast majority of households in Québec are adequately sheltered. This is a result of ongoing efforts by the public, private and community sectors to ensure the development of housing. To this end, public authorities spend significant amounts of money on housing programs; the housing industry produces good quality homes at affordable prices and helps improve the housing stock; and the community sector contributes to the supply of services and introduces innovative initiatives in the field of housing development and management.

This very positive situation is also due to the fact that Québec society has created institutions and instruments to oversee the proper operation of the housing market and ensure security of tenure for households. Among other things,they help promote discrimination-free home ownership and financing.

The entire population has long had access to basic services including drinking water, electricity supplies, domestic waste disposal and telephone lines. Measures exist to prevent the loss of these services including interruptions of energy supplies during the cold December to March period.

With regard to security of tenure and landlord-tenant relations, Québec has developed a series of mechanisms designed to ensure that the respective rights and obligations of both parties are upheld. First,laws exist to protect property owners against arbitrary expropriation. Second, the *Regie du logement* (housing board) is responsible for overseeing home rental conditions using an approach based on information and conciliation. The *Charter of Human Rights and Freedoms* also offers protection against dicrimination in the housing rental market.

Québec's laws grant tenants the fundamental right of security of tenure. All tenants are entitled to have their leases renewed at the end of their terms, if they so wish, and are protected against excessive rent increases. Eviction must be confirmed by the court and is authorized only for certain reasons set out in the legislation, including failure to pay rent and behaviour prejudicial to others. Owners may also repossess their properties for their own use or house members of their immediate families.

The percentage of owner-occupiers has grown steadily in Québec in recent years, from 50.4% in 1976 to 56.5% in 1996.The figure is somewhat lower (at 41.3%, up from 37% in 1996) for households supported by women, most of which are people living alone or single parent families.

Over the same 20-year period, new forms of ownership such as co-ownership and housing cooperatives,better suited to urban environments, were developed. Although still relatively uncommon, these types of ownership have produced positive results in terms of social integration and occupier responsibility for housing.

Housing assistance: ongoing progress

While most households in Québec can find suitable housing on the market, certain groups need help. They include households in financial difficulty (mostly led by women) and vulnerable or underprivileged individuals with special housing needs.This latter group is composed for the most part of the homeless, the disabled, elderly people with reduced independence, young people in difficulty and abused women.

Government intervention in the field of housing has increased steadily in recent decades, and has been aimed in priority at low to moderate income households. For example, 8% of all Québec households received assistance for social-type housing (low rental housing and housing allowances) in 1999, compared with just 3% in 1981.

Currently, Québec has a social housing stock in excess of 88,000 units, comprising nearly 65,000 public units managed for the most part by municipal agencies, and around 23,000 other social housing units belonging to cooperatives,non-profit organizations and private landlords, for which means-tested assistance is paid.

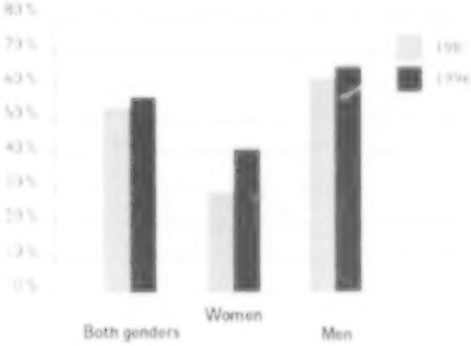
In addition, capital subsidies have been paid for some 20,000 cooperative dwellings and 25,000 dwellings belonging to non-profit organizations, most of which are available to low income households. At the same time, the state supports more than 148,000 other low income households by paying a housing allowance that is offered to families with children and elderly people aged 55 or over, regardless of where they live.

In 1997, to meet the needs arising from changes in the housing situation, Québec adopted general orientations and devised a five-year plan of action for the period 1997-2001. The plan resulted in a comprehensive review of government interventions and reallocation of available monies to maintain and enhance the assistance available to inadequately sheltered households.

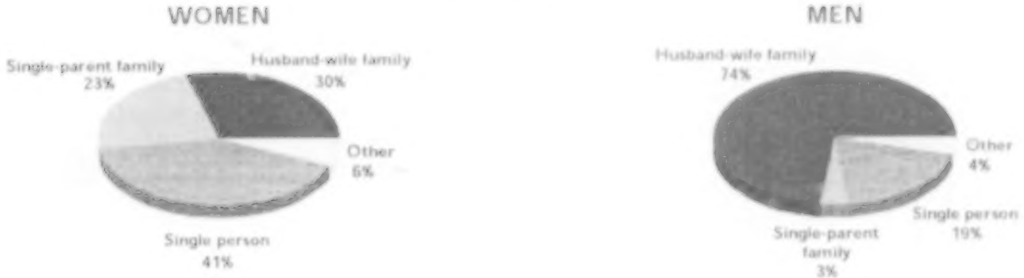
The Plan of Action led to the creation of the *Quebec Community Housing Fund*, a jointly managed fund set up to facilitate access to housing for low to moderate income families. The fund manages the financing of the *AccesLogis* program,through which the Québec government supports the production of cooperative and non-profit housing with a significant financial contribution from local municipal and non-governmental partners.

In the period 1997 to 2000, the program generated the production of nearly 3,400 dwellings,mainly for households receiving financial assistance with their rent. The program is divided into three separate components, one for families, people living alone and independent seniors, one for seniors with slightly declining independence and one for people with temporary or permanent special housing needs.

Changes in the rate of homeownership by gender of household maintainer



Distribution of household types by gender of household maintainer Québec, 1996



Overall, in the period 1996 to 2000, annual contributions by the Canadian and Québec governments to social housing in Québec increased by 16%, from CAN $372 million to CAN $442 million[2]. According to the most recent data available, the households receiving assistance can be divided as follows:

- 47% of public and private low rental housing (LRH) tenants are households supported by individuals aged 65 or over, and 17% are single parent families;
- 33% of households receiving assistance under the *Housing Allowance* program are single parent families, and 32% are households aged 65 and over;
- around 75% of all households receiving assistance are households supported by women.

The role of municipalities in the field of social housing

Québec's municipalities have always played a role in social housing by initiating requests for public housing and by forming municipal bureaus to manage this housing. Still today, they are involved as intermediaries and participants in the *AccèsLogis* program.

In the last 40 years, thanks to government programs, the City of Montreal has piloted the creation of a low rental housing (LRH) stock now numbering 20,000 dwellings, all managed by a municipal housing bureau. Other than a dozen medium-sized complexes of between 100 and 300 dwellings, all of Montreal's LRH units are situated in small buildings that blend into their neighbourhoods and help consolidate the residential framework. Montreal now receives support under the *AccèsLogis* program, enabling it to construct 500 new social housing units on its territory every year.

Another municipal corporation has built up a stock of 5,700 housing units with rents below market rates, by purchasing and renovating buildings. Around 3,600 such units have been renovated thanks to Québec government programs with additional support from the City of Montreal. Recurrent municipal assistance helps keep rental costs down.

Low rental housing in Montreal

In Montreal, the municipal housing corporations offer community development support services. Social workers liaise with tenants' associations, solving problems between neighbours and encouraging participation in different projects. Support is also given to community organizations that offer services to residents (drop-out prevention, community kitchens, escort services for seniors, psychosocial support for people with special needs). At the same time, the corporations help recently-arrived immigrants with integration issues, in particular by offering French language and civic training programs.

---

[2] In this text monetary amounts are expressed in Canadian dollars (CAN$) in March 2001 the Canadian dollar was worth approximately $0.64 American dollars.

THE QUÉBEC GOVERNMENT AND HOUSING ASSISTANCE

SOCIAL HOUSING ASSISTANCE PROGRAMS

Housing for low to moderate income families

- Subsidized public housing managed by municipal authorities
- Community housing - housing cooperatives and non-profit organizations

Assistance for low income families living in private dwellings

- Housing subsidies for low income households ("rent supplement")
- Housing allowance for seniors
- Housing allowance for families with children

Assistance for community organizations and low rental housing tenants' associations

- Operating subsidies and funds for special projects

HOUSING IMPROVEMENT AND ADAPTATION PROGRAMS

Renovation assistance

- Emergency home repairs for low income owner-occupiers
- Home renovations for low income owner-occupiers in rural communities
- Home renovations for owner-occupiers in Nunavik
- Housing renovation and revitalization of old neighbourhoods
- Renovations to shelters for abused women
- Home repair program for owner-occupiers with properties built on clay and damaged by drought
- Home repairs for owner-occupiers whose properties have been exposed to radon
- Assistance for the owners of residential buildings damaged by pyrite

Home adaptations for handicapped individuals and people with declining independence

HOME OWNERSHIP PROGRAMS

- Creation of cooperatives
- Home purchase or home purchase-renovation for households in Nunavik

The *Accueil Bonneau*, a respite centre for homeless people, in Montreal

Interventions for the homeless

It is difficult to specify the exact number of homeless people in Québec. An estimated 15,000 individuals are thought to use homeless shelters at least once every year. This figure includes individuals with no permanent shelter, no fixed address or classified as itinerant.

The phenomenon of itinerancy increased in the early 1990s, especially in Montreal, coinciding with the economic recession and the deinstitutionalization of individuals suffering from mental health problems. There is also a clear need for shelter resources and special support for homeless women, many of whom suffer from mental health problems related to sexual abuse and violence.

One of the *AccèsLogis* program's components is aimed specifically at groups with special problems. Approximately 300 housing units have been created under this component. Nearly 15,000 individuals from the target groups have also been helped by other programs - for example, the assistance program for underprivileged roomers, assistance for shelters for abused women, purchase-renovation incentives and the *Old Neighbourhood Revitalization Program*. The government also intends to introduce assistance specifically for young people, by creating transitional housing units for youths with adjustment difficulties.

A number of round tables have been formed by government, municipal, community and charitable organizations with a view to identifying viable solutions to the complex problem of itinerancy and harmonizing housing, health and social service initiatives for this group. In addition to promoting permanent housing, the tables take a direct, preventive approach by creating rooming houses offering multidisciplinary community support. This type of initiative not only offers accommodation to people at risk, but also supports them as they seek to become independent.

The Asticou Municipal Housing Corporation

The Asticou Corporation (an Aboriginal word meaning "large river") was created by the City of Hull and serves as a vehicle for implementation of the *AccèsLogis* program in the Hull region, overseeing the creation of affordable housing while helping revitalize the city's old neighbourhoods.This program, which is designed to offer a range of solutions to the needs of different communities, promotes the implementation of housing projects offering accommodation for both subsidized and non-subsidized tenants, thus facilitating social integration. In 2001,counting units currently on the drawing board,the corporation will be responsible for more than a hundred homes,half of which will benefit from subsidies reducing the rent to 25% of the occupant's income.

The City ensures the corporation's viability by transferring buildings free of charge or at reduced prices. It also contributes to home construction projects proposed by community organizations. In the near future, the Asticou Corporation plans to diversify its activities even further by creating rooms for young people aged 18 to 22, with supervisory services.

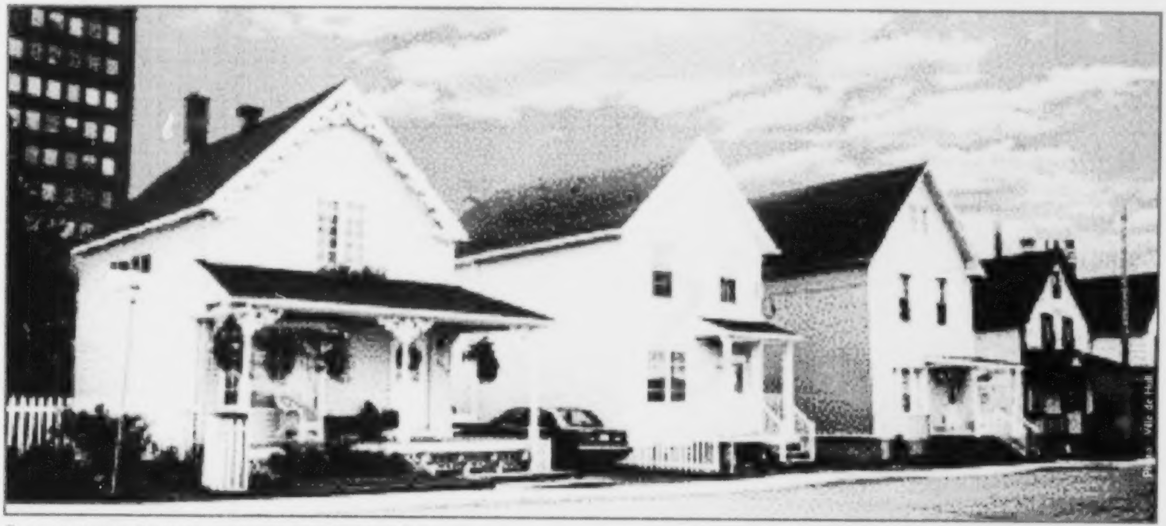


Photo: Ville de Hull

Renovated single family homes in the old district of Hull

HOUSING IMPROVEMENT AND ADAPTATION

Housing quality: a regulatory and professional framework

Public buildings and apartment blocks of a certain size are subject to the pan-Canadian Building Code adopted by Québec, which governs safety, cleanliness, access and protection issues. Québec is actively involved in the ongoing improvement of these regulations. Small residential buildings, for their part, must comply with municipal bylaws, and municipalities can also adopt their own habitability codes.

The municipalities play a major role in housing improvement by shouldering much of the responsibility for applying and monitoring the various regulations and bylaws designed to guarantee the quality and salubrity of the housing stock. They also provide basic services.

A Québec government agency, the *Regie du batiment*, oversees the training and accreditation of building contractors and also supervises warranty programs in the housing sector. In addition, tenants can appeal to the *Regie du logement* if they feel their dwellings do not meet standards of cleanliness or safety.

A final factor that helps guarantee housing quality is the supervisory role played by the professional orders, which were created to protect the public.

Photo : Ville de Sherbrooke

The oldest row houses in Sherbrooke, now the Melbourne Housing Cooperative.

Housing improvement and adaptation assistance programs

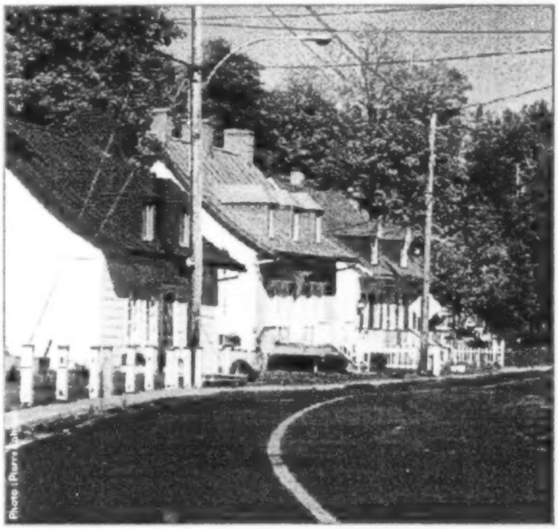
Between 1996 and 2000, public investments in housing renovation and adaptation programs generated work valued at approximately CAN $700 million in more than 75,000 housing units. The programs helped improve the living conditions of the households concerned, mainly low income tenants in urban areas, low income owner-occupiers in rural areas, and handicapped people. They also helped promote the revitalization of older neighbourhoods.

The programs are managed by local or regional municipalities, which contribute financially and implement them in designated sectors of their territories. Several municipalities, especially in the larger urban areas, have also developed their own initiatives to complement these programs.

As an example, the City of Québec, in its Housing Policy adopted in early 2001,states its intention to continue efforts to improve the quality of its existing housing stock, so as to encourage families to settle in central neighbourhoods,support the maintenance and improvement of buildings and facilitate access to affordable housing for low to moderate income families. In concrete terms, the City offers subsidies and tax credits for home ownership, new construction and residential recycling or renovation, as part of or in addition to the benefits available under government programs.

Most of Québec's rural households own their homes. To help improve the quality of the rural housing stock, Québec has instituted a home renovation program for low income owners, known as the *RénoVillage* program. Introduced in 1998, the new program applies to the entire territory of every municipality with less than 5,000 inhabitants, and also covers more densely populated areas not served by water supply or sewer systems.

Thanks to the *RénoVillage* program, approximately 6,000 homes belonging to low income owners in rural areas have been renovated.To qualify for support under the program, the renovation work must be aimed at correcting major defects in the building's structure, frame, plumbing, heating, electrical system or fire prevention measures. Subsidies are available for up to 90% of the cost of such work, subject to a maximum total amount.



Ville de Québec

Saint-Roch Park , Québec City

Redevelopment of the Saint-Roch Neighbourhood of Québec City

Québec City is the capital of Québec and has been recognized as a UNESCO World Heritage City since 1985. Like many North American cities, it underwent some major transformations in the 1970s. Among other things, its downtown area deteriorated as new shopping malls were developed in the suburbs. The central portion of the city experienced significant economic difficulties as a result.

In the last few years, the City of Québec has developed a planning program based on rebuilding the urban framework that is respectful of the history of the Saint-Roch neighbourhood, a former nerve centre of economic and social activity in Québec. The City set an example by investing massively in the early days. The State, private promoters, business people and residents then followed suit, initiating a significant shift back to the downtown area that went against the trend of urban sprawl. The challenge was to rehabilitate an entire neighbourhood, with emphasis on aesthetic improvement, by rebuilding sidewalks and roads, restoring the industrial heritage, renovating storefronts and creating landscaped public areas.

The redevelopment plan was based on three main areas of activity, namely artistic creation, education and new technology. The Québec government relocated universities and research centres in the neighbourhood and encouraged high technology firms to settle there by granting tax benefits. The City, for its part, made the courageous decision to remove the roof that had covered the neighbourhood's main shopping street since the 1970s.

The City relied mainly on developing the neighbourhood's assets, ensuring that the existing population remained in place, and encouraging new arrivals to settle permanently. This focused approach produced excellent results. The business district was reborn as industrial buildings were converted into artists' studios, homes were renovated, vacant lots were redeveloped, empty offices were renovated and relet, and stores were taken over by high technology businesses. The Saint-Roch neighbourhood is gradually resuming its role as an environment full of promise and activity.

Neighbourhood revitalization incentives

As part of its housing improvement efforts, the Québec government has also implemented an *Old Neighbourhood Revitalization Program*, the cost of which is shared equally by the government and participating municipalities. The program is designed to rehabilitate old neighbourhoods, mainly through residential renovation. A development component also allows cities to set aside part of the budget for improvement work in designated neighbourhoods, in particular for parks, non-residential buildings, outdoor furniture, leisure equipment and so on. They can also use the funds to finance home ownership incentive measures in those neighbourhoods.

To ensure that the program could be adapted to specific local situations, its principal parameters were established in close cooperation with representatives from the larger cities. Each participating municipality was then asked to specify how the program would apply on its own territory. As a result, municipalities are able to target priority neighbourhoods requiring revitalization work, to favour certain types of activity, to establish additional eligibility criteria for projects and to introduce management and control measures tailored to their own communities.

Between 1996 and 2000, some 26,000 housing units were renovated under the program, triggering significant growth in private investment in the target neighbourhoods and producing spin-off improvements in the quality of life of their residents. It has therefore helped to meet the specific needs of low income groups in the older neighbourhoods of target municipalities while continuing to prevent deterioration of the housing stock and encouraging renovation work that will benefit all households.

A school recycled for residential housing, Montreal

Adaptation to population ageing and special needs

Changes to Québec's health system in recent years, combined with a marked ageing of the population, have led to a significant reduction in the percentage of seniors and people with diminishing independence living in institutions. This has created new housing needs, for which a variety of solutions have been identified. For example, the Québec government, in addition to promoting home care for these groups, now encourages local municipalities to relax their zoning by-laws so as to allow separate accommodation units to be built in existing homes. This type of flexibility has led to the emergence of a new housing concept known as the "intergenerational home", where young adults and elderly parents can live together in two separate units.

Québec also favours the extension of measures designed to provide handicapped people with physical access to housing and public buildings. Since 1996, public funds have helped adapt more than 5,000 dwellings for handicapped people or people with slightly declining independence. In addition to social housing designed specifically to meet the needs of these groups, the government also subsidizes adaptations to private homes.

The *Safe House Improvement Program,* introduced in 1995, has helped renova shelters offering more than 1,600 beds to abused women.

THE GOVERNMENT'S HOUSING ORIENTATIONS

Improve the quality of housing units and the surrounding environment.

Facilitate access by households to housing that is adapted to their needs.

Ensure that low and moderate income households have access to adequate housing conditions.

Contribute to the smooth operation and growth of the housing sector.

Promote the production of quality housing at affordable prices.

Support community initiatives aimed at local responsibility.

Recognize and uphold the right to security of tenure.

Special housing improvement initiatives in isolated Northern regions

The Canadian and Québec governments offer a number of programs designed to improve the housing conditions of Québec's Métis, Indian and Inuit peoples. In addition to providing appropriate housing, the measures are aimed at encouraging Aboriginal households to take responsibility for their own living conditions.

The population of Nunavik, an area located north of the 55th parallel, is made up of 2,100 households (1996), almost all of which are housed in a social housing stock composed of homes designed by the *Société d'habitation du Québec* to meet Northern construction standards. The stock is managed by the Kativik municipal housing bureau. An additional 89 housing units were built between 1996 and 2000.

In the next few years, thanks to the home ownership, home renovation and purchase-renovation programs offered exclusively in this region by the Québec government, a further 60 homes will be built. By the year 2000, approximately 40 high income households living in Nunavik had been able to buy their homes thanks to support from such programs - and this, in a region where there is no private housing market. This achievement was the result of a government experiment aimed at releasing social housing units and reducing the demand for them.

Photo : Emanuel Loon - Institut culturel Avataq

Since 1996, the *Société d'habitation du Québec* has been entrusted by various government departments and agencies with the task of constructing two local community service centres, one rehabilitation centre and several multifamily dwellings for Nunavik personnel.

Photo : Sylvain Bilodeau

Salluit, Nunavik

Photo : Jacques Morin - L'imagier

COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT AND ELIMINATION OF POVERTY

SHARING THE FRUITS OF DEVELOPMENT

Levers and conditions for social participation

In a responsible and inclusive society, individuals must be able to exercise their rights, play an active role in society, be fully integrated, and enjoy both freedom and equality without distinction or exclusion. If every individual is to share in social development, no one must be deprived of the means to develop his or her capabilities to the full.

Safety, health, education and employment are fundamental elements of personal development and the cornerstones of progress in society in general and the habitat sector in particular. Safety is one of the basic conditions of participation in social and economic life. Violence, crime, accidents and natural disasters often go hand-in-hand with poverty and declining quality of life. The goal of providing a safe habitat through effective control and prevention is one that requires effort not only from governments and local authorities but also from grassroots organizations and the population itself.

In the field of health and personal welfare, the government's principal initiatives are aimed at promoting health, preventing disease and maintaining access to basic, specialized and ultra-specialized care in all regions. Locally-organized front-line services can solve the vast majority of health and social service-related problems. The fact that individuals with temporary or permanent disabilities can find solutions to their needs in their natural environment is a major factor in determining their quality of life.

Québec's measures are aimed at promoting equal access for all adults and children to education, including higher education, and achieving as high a success rate as possible, regardless of social or regional origin and economic conditions. With the emergence of the knowledge society, social and professional insertion depends increasingly on educational success and access to ongoing training that allows individuals to maintain their qualifications throughout their working lives. Measures such as the development of educational daycare services, the introduction of early intervention services for children in difficulty along with support for their parents, and integration of newly-arrived immigrant students and handicapped children, have all been given priority in the government's efforts to encourage children to develop their full potential and achieve success at school.

Employment allows individuals to be economically independent, and also enables them to fulfill their personal and social potential. Ensuring that jobs exist for as many people as possible continues to be the best way of fighting social and economic exclusion. The government's action in this field, in addition to supporting the principal local and regional economic levers to promote job creation, has consisted in creating favourable conditions to ensure a balance between labour supply and demand. Its principal interventions are aimed at promoting better qualifications in both the general education and high technology sectors, intensifying employment incentives and employment assistance measures, reconciling work and family life and adapting legislation governing the labour market to suit the growing numbers of atypical forms of employment.

The government is currently preparing policies and interventions based on individual and community accountability and local inter-sector action. Among other things, the policies involve creating and strengthening the conditions required to achieve dual objectives, at the community, regional and provincial levels. First, every individual should be able to develop his or her full potential, play an active role in social life and obtain his or her fair share of the collective wealth. At the same time, the community should be able to progress socially, culturally and economically in a context where economic growth is directed toward sustainable development and social justice for all.

Photo : Pierre Lahoud

Healthy Towns and Villages

Healthy Towns and Villages is a movement that promotes joint action by municipal services and community organizations, making full use of the resources available from health and education networks, the labour market, community groups and private citizens. The movement's actions are based on the premise that the municipalities, being the level of government closest to the public, have the greatest impact on individual health, in which quality of life is an important factor.

Healthy Towns and Villages allows the population to play an active role in developing community well-being and influencing decisions that affect their quality of life. It also allows the municipalities to be leaders in community dynamics,while encouraging them to consider the "health and quality of life" factor in all their actions. The movement's initiatives are good examples of the types of steps that can be taken to revitalize neighbourhoods and improve living environments and conditions, especially for the most vulnerable members of society. More than 140 municipalities, representing half the population of Québec, have joined the movement.

The fight against poverty and exclusion

Despite Québec's economic progress over the last few years, poverty continues to be a problem for certain sectors of society, at significant human, social and economic cost. A new form of synergy is therefore required between economic development and social development, involving all social partners in the public, community and private sectors, in order to promote social cohesion and better coordination of activities around the key goal of fighting poverty and exclusion.

Accordingly, the government and its partners intend to implement a series of actions aimed at preventing poverty, by improving living conditions and promoting independence for the most vulnerable groups. The fight against poverty and exclusion is based on a firmly-held conviction that individuals and communities have the potential, the ability and the willingness to play a role in preparing and implementing the government's strategy.

Québec's current programs and measures clearly illustrate the government's desire to achieve social solidarity. For example, the *Work Income Support Program for Parents*, known by its French acronym APPORT, grants additional income support for parents in low-paid jobs. The *Automatic Support Collection Plan* ensures that child support payments are collected automatically. The *Pay Equity Act* is designed to correct wage disparities due to systemic gender-based discrimination. Provisions also exist to counter impoverishment among 120,000 Québecers who, for physical or psychological reasons, are unable to hold down jobs. The *Poverty Prevention Fund* was created to provide partnership funding for job creation projects aimed at underprivileged members of society. Lastly, the *Youth Solidarity Program* offers young people an opportunity to take part in a social and professional insertion process, at the end of which they can obtain jobs or return to school.

In addition to these income and employment support initiatives, the government has also introduced measures in other fields, contributing in a variety of ways to the goal of fighting poverty and exclusion. Examples include the *Prescription Drug Insurance Plan*, which covers the one million poorest Québecers among others; housing support for low-income families; general access to educational daycare services; and measures to promote the development of the social economy.

Future steps in the fight against poverty and exclusion will focus mainly on creating jobs and reducing unemployment. They will target specific groups, including undereducated youths, single parents, some recent immigrants, visible minorities, the handicapped and people with significant limitations on their ability to work. Specific actions will apply in designated areas with higher poverty rates, based on an inter-sector approach conducive to local accountability.

Priority interventions in the poverty prevention strategy include employment incentives and a special measure for young people receiving income security, as well as programs designed to counter impoverishment among poorer social groups, promote equality of access to education, develop community support services in underprivileged areas and support community action and the social economy.

The Cooperative Framework Agreement between the Québec Government and the City of Montreal

On April 1, 1999, the Mayor of Montreal and the Minister of State for Municipal Affairs and Greater Montreal signed and published a cooperative framework agreement between the city and the Québec government. Among other things, the agreement established a monitoring mechanism for a series of sector-based agreements covering a range of social, economic and planning interventions in certain designated neighbourhoods over a three-year period.

Under the agreement, local organizations and stakeholders were invited to propose new initiatives aimed at preventing poverty and social exclusion. The initiatives selected for implementation include support for single-parent families, integration of cultural communities, shelter and moral support for young mothers, street work and youth interventions in parks and public places, the creation of an educational support service for families, support for the improvement of housing conditions, and so on. Another component of the agreement focuses on social problems including prostitution, crime, itinerancy and substance abuse.

The joint intervention plan is also designed to enhance the quality of the urban environment and impact positively on neighbourhood life. Approximately one hundred projects were selected in four different categories, including housing interventions, community equipment interventions, revitalization of commercial streets and improvements to existing buildings. Among other things, they provide support for owner-occupiers wishing to acquire existing buildings, the installation of equipment in community and social centres, revitalization work on commercial streets, creation of new parks and rehabilitation of existing parks.

Montreal's downtown area

The role of towns and communities

Experience in recent decades has shown that, in addition to government policies and measures, close cooperation between public and social players is required if the fight against poverty and exclusion is to be truly effective.

Although Québec's municipalities do not have primary responsibility for programs involving wealth redistribution, they have gradually become involved in poverty prevention initiatives in response to public demand. Following changes to the economic context and the growing numbers of urban problems, municipal representatives, who are in direct daily contact with the population, are increasingly being asked to intervene in social issues.

As a result of this trend, the municipalities have developed social programs and interventions in cooperation with other government authorities and the community sector. One of their goals is to try to solve the problem of exclusion in urban environments. The municipalities also help promote social inclusion by using leisure, for which they are mainly responsible, as an instrument of personal and collective development.

Bicycle path along the Saint-Charles River, Québec City

Equality of the Sexes

Québec is one of the most progressive nations in the world in terms of male-female equality. It has made great strides in recent decades, with the result that women are now much more involved as true partners in the development of Québec.

The Fourth United Nations World Conference on Women, held in Beijing in 1995, gave new impetus to the need for states to adopt measures that would ensure respect for the fundamental human rights of women and girls, especially the right to equality: equality of civic, cultural, economic, political and social rights, equality in the obligations of women and men, equality in their value and dignity as human beings, and equality of opportunity when making choices. The principle of equality between men and women, which Québec society supports, enables women to assume a growing share of power in public affairs. Recognition of equality also involves respect for differences, since equality is a synonym of equivalence, not of similarity.

Respect for the principle of equality has been a point of focus for government action since 1997. In the year 2000, Québec adopted a new action program for the period 2000-2003, entitled *Equality for All Women in Quebec*. The program is designed to give concrete form to the principle of equality by establishing equal social, cultural, economic, legal and political conditions between men and women.

Photo : Michel Bilodeau

Two Early Childhood Centres

A former private home with lots of windows, located near a medical clinic and outdoor skating rink, just five minutes' walk from an outdoor swimming pool, has been converted for use as an educational daycare service. The centre, known as *La Petite Grenouille* (The Little Frog),is located in Lévis,across the St.Lawrence River from Québec City, on the main street, and is served by public transportation. A drop-off area and services have been provided to facilitate access. The property is surrounded by a tall hedge that screens it from the nearby parking lot, prevents it from being overlooked and shelters it from street noise, thus providing the children with a private playing area backing onto a wooded cliff that also adds to the security of the premises.

The *Fleur de Papier* (Paper Flower) centre is located in Montreal, and provides daycare services for a company's employees. In addition to its functional premises, the centre boasts an extremely successful landscape design. The landscape architect who oversaw the work was able to fulfill all the users' expectations. Outdoor lighting adjusted to the seasons is an original feature of the design. Careful arrangements of trees and other vegetation help temper the rigours of the northern climate and provide shade and privacy during the summer. Safety is a major criterion in the spaces set aside for play-related and environmental education.

FAMILY LIVING ENVIRONMENTS

Habitat and family policy

Proper development of families depends to a large extent on the quality of the environment in which they live. Many of Québec's families have understood this, and seek a physical environment that offers comfort, harmony and security in addition to the essential basic services.

Family policy helps tighten community links. The Québec government has recognized the fundamental role played by parents in the development of their children, and has also recognized its own supporting role in the process, emphasizing the social aspect of its actions and their structuring effects.

Québec's family policy targets three main goals:

(1) ensuring equity between families by granting more assistance to those with low incomes while maintaining universal state support;

(2) facilitating reconciliation of parental and professional responsibilities;

(3) promoting child development and equality of opportunity.

Within this framework, the *Ministère de la Famille et de l'Enfance* works with its government partners and also with community partners including the municipalities, regional authorities,employers' and union organizations, community organization networks, health and social service networks and the education sector. Cooperation between all these players appears to be a fundamental element in providing support for families, promoting child and parental development and interrupting the model of poverty or social non-adjustment that recurs from generation to generation.

Since 1997, Québec has given priority to the development of low-cost daycare services for children aged four and under throughout its territory (including the Aboriginal communities). The results have been spectacular. To consolidate and develop this essential basic service, the government has planned and implemented a network of Early Childhood Centres with the support of partners including the regional development boards. By the end of 2000, there were 130,000 places available - nearly 100,000 more than was the case ten years ago.

Pilot daycare projects offering services outside normal hours have also been made available to help parents with unusual working hours to reconcile work, educational and family responsibilities. The government has also made full-time kindergarten services available in schools for all five-year-olds. School daycare services cover the periods outside classroom hours.

The City of Sherbrooke's Family Initiative

Sherbrooke is the major urban centre of its metropolitan area and has recently implemented its fourth plan of action under its family policy adopted in 1992. After establishing priorities for action, namely security, housing, environment, urban planning and transportation, the family advisory committee and public services committee worked together to establish their goals and methods as part of a joint three-year plan.

Their first priority is young families. Their goal is to facilitate access to adequate, affordable housing while supporting a revitalization program for the city's older neighbourhoods.Their second priority is the introduction of a home ownership program for young families, and their third is to create a housing stock that reflects the diversity and development of family structures while promoting the production of intergenerational homes.

The committees' security-related initiatives are aimed at "providing families with a peaceful and secure environment". Their goals are as follows: increasing public involvement in the protection of property and individuals, ensuring that children and teenagers can move around safely on foot, and improving safety in public places.The methods used to achieve these goals include promotion and support of prevention programs, the creation of school lanes, reorganization of the areas immediately surrounding elementary schools, better lighting in public places, etc.

Municipal initiatives for families

Québec's families also need convenient access to schools and daycare services, the latter being essential to parents who work or study. The municipalities are eager to meet these expectations. They generally do so by establishing family policies and special action plans aimed, for example, at improving access to housing for families or preventing crime and enhancing security in residential areas.

Municipal family policies reflect family concerns relating to different aspects of housing. It is mainly with regard to their immediate environment that families want to be heard and supported by their municipalities. The issues of interest to them include housing, leisure facilities, travel and security, which form the basis of a quality living environment. A number of socioeconomic and institutional partners are involved in the process,enriching it with their respective contributions.

The methods used by Québec's municipalities vary according to their size, urban or rural locations and administrative structures. Success for family-oriented actions depends on the willingness of municipal representatives to take action and on the political and administrative investments they are prepared to make. At the heart of their initiatives is a major partner, the Municipal and Family Action Group, which helps realize the government's family mission.

SAFETY IN THE CITIES

Crime prevention

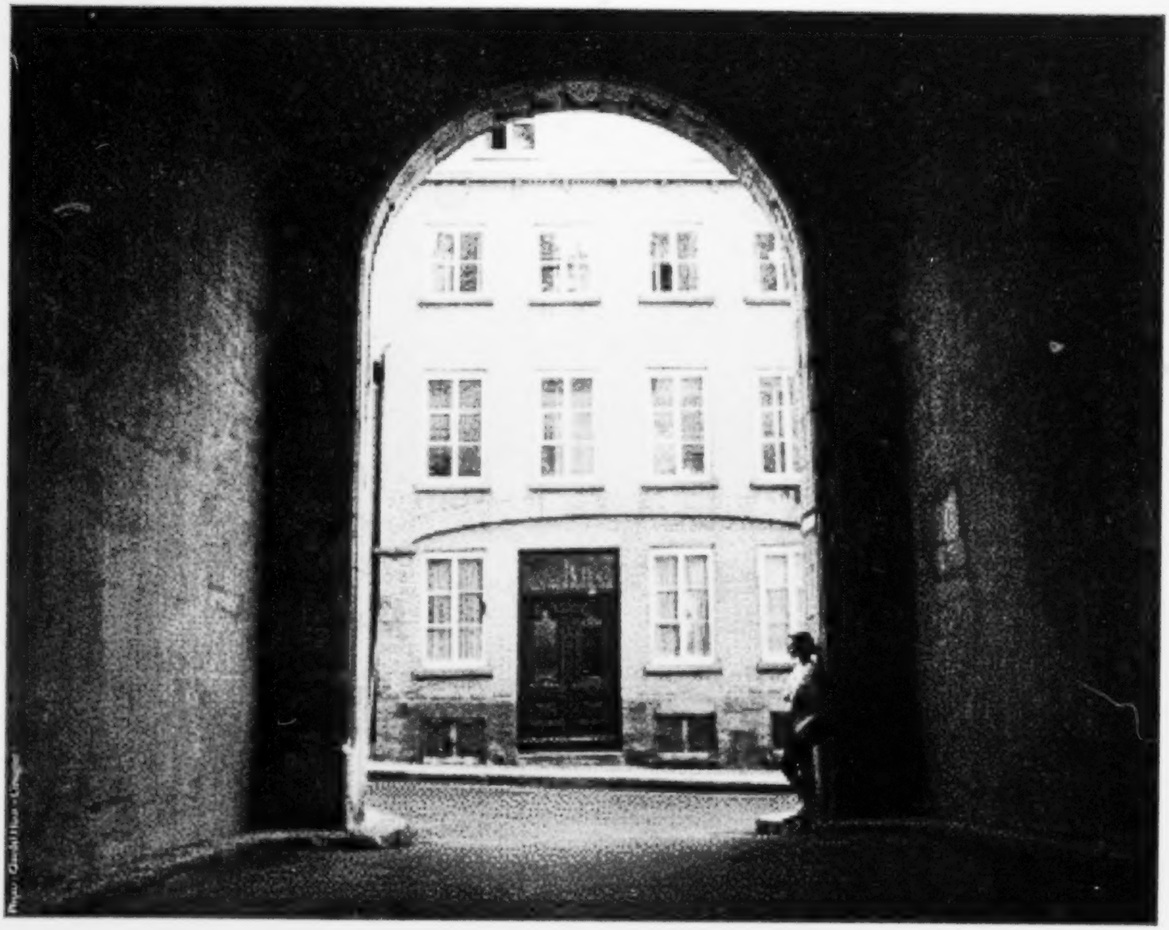
Historically, Québec's crime record has always compared advantageously with those of other societies. For example, it has a comparatively low rate of crimes against the person (6.7 per 1,000 inhabitants) and crimes against property (37.2 per 1,000 inhabitants), as well as an excellent road safety record (9.9 deaths per billion kilometres travelled). Québec also has a low rate of imprisonment (58 per 100,000 adults). Recent civil safety and fire safety reforms have also helped enhance the quality and safety of the physical environment.

However, Québec is now facing new problems due to an increase in organized crime - for example, infiltration, "market" diversification, cybercrime and so on. The presence of organized crime and the public's sometimes negative perception of the legal process have combined to create a sense of insecurity among some of the groups most vulnerable to victimization, namely children, the elderly, the handicapped and women. A commitment is required from players at every level (government, municipal, community and private) to implement measures aimed at preventing crime and ensuring the safety of the entire population.

Guides to promote safety in the environment

The government and municipal authorities are anxious to raise awareness of this issue among Québec's municipalities and other players,and recommend a comprehensive approach - one that calls upon grassroots organizations and upon the population itself. A guide on this subject was produced in 1999 by Québec's municipal sector-based table and its committee on the home environment, in cooperation with the Municipal and Family Action Group. The guide is entitled *Safety in the Environment, for the Well-being of Citizens and Families.*

The isolation of certain streets and the need to travel alone at night or outside peak hours need to be taken into consideration when planning and organizing community spaces in municipalities. To address this problem, the *Ministère des Affaires municipales et de la Métropole* has published a guide entitled *Planning and Safety in Public Places.* The studies, collective thinking, interventions and public strategies on which the guide is based all propose solutions that may help improve the planning of public sites from the standpoint of safety.This year, the City of Montreal has also published a *Guide to Planning for a Safe Environment,* which will be used to prepare training for different professional groups and organizations involved in the planning of public sites in cities.



Safety for women

Women tend to feel less safe in cities than men. The type of fear felt by men and women is also different; women are afraid of being sexually attacked, to such an extent that they may limit their activities, especially in the evenings. Lack of safety is therefore a major obstacle to their freedom, the exercise of their rights as citizens and the attainment of true equality between men and women.

The problem of safety has been recognized in Montreal since the early 1990s, when the City launched its *Women in the City* program. The municipal administration is also actively engaged in the Women and Urban Safety Committee, known by its French acronym CAFSU, which brings together women's groups, community organizations, institutions and local authorities concerned by the question of safety for women on the island of Montreal. Among other things, the partnership led to the creation of the *Between Stops* service offered by the Montreal Urban Community Transportation Corporation, an initiative that has won international recognition and was nominated as one of Habitat's "best practices". Thanks to the service, women and girls travelling alone in the evening can get off the bus between stops, making life much safer for female users of public transportation who need to walk in certain sectors of the city.

In October 1998, on World Habitat Day, held under the theme of safety in the city, Montreal's achievements were praised and have since attracted considerable interest throughout the world. Indeed, Montreal's expertise in the field of women's safety is now widely recognized, and has led among other things to the first International Conference on women's safety, organized in conjunction with the Women in the City international network, which will be held in Montreal in May 2002.

Photo : Denis [illegible]

Safety considerations for women have also been taken into account when renovating some of the city's subway stations. For example, based on the "see and be seen" safety principle, the walls of some of the older buildings have been replaced by glass facades that make it easier to see if someone is inside or outside the station, thus promoting natural surveillance by other users. Better lighting, emergency telephones and effective signs have also been installed to enhance women's safety, and are of benefit to the rest of the population too.

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT AND EMPLOYMENT

Creating sustainable jobs

In addition to contributing to economic development, intensifying the competitive capacity of firms and encouraging market development, the government faces another challenge, that of employment. Among other things, it supports local and regional initiatives, reinforces the conditions for sustained development of the social economy, creates a framework favourable to the development of entrepreneurship, especially among women and young people, adopts strategies targeting vulnerable groups and adapts its legislation to the new labour market context.

Companies also have a set of social responsibilities that are laid out in Québec's legislation. For example, they are responsible for labour training, implementing the apprenticeship and qualification plan, workplace health and safety, pay equity and labour standards.

With regard to vocational and technical training, the government is currently involved in an operation aimed at adapting vocational training programs and developing new programs in emerging sectors and sectors experiencing labour shortages. It is also promoting work experience sessions and establishing mechanisms to facilitate the shift from vocational studies to more advanced technical training.

Photo : [illegible]

Local and regional socioeconomic development

In its *Local and Regional Development Support Policy* adopted in 1997, the Québec government delegated responsibility for regional joint action and planning to the Regional Development Boards (RDBs), and responsibility for front-line service programming, management and execution to the Local Development Centres (LDCs).

Thanks to regionalization and decompartmentalization of public services, it has been possible to introduce inter-sector approaches that facilitate problem solving in the field. Civil society stakeholders are able to play a role in preparing and implementing development strategies and actions thanks to the existence of authorities such as the RDBs, the regional labour market councils and the LDCs.

This approach, involving local and regional participation and accountability, is consistent with the orientations of the *Policy concerning the Status of Women*, aimed at ensuring that women play a role in regional development. First, when adapting, rationalizing and simplifying local government services, the specific situation and interests of women are taken into account to ensure that services are better suited to their needs. Second, local and regional authorities cannot be made accountable in a democratic way unless the dynamism and the coordination and planning capabilities of women are used to the same extent as those of men.

The cities, for their part, support many local development intervention groups, including the City of Montreal's Economic and Community Development Corporations (known by their French acronym CDEC) and the City of Québec's Economic Recovery Marketplace (CRÉECQ). The main activities of these groups are coordination, employability services, support services for firms and promotion of local manpower, with the primary goal of creating and maintaining jobs in the community.

The Québec and Youth Summit

In February 2000, the *Quebec and Youth Summit* brought together young people and the main partners from different sectors of society to discuss four principal themes: the challenge of employment, knowledge and training, an open approach to the world and a fair society. At the end of their discussions, the participants adopted eight principal priorities and 40 general agreements on implementation actions. Nearly 90 measures emerging from the general agreements are currently being implemented by the government and its partners. Many of them are likely to have a positive impact on the quality of the housing that Québec is able to offer its young people.

With regard to knowledge and training, the government's commitments include a major investment in the education network,achievement plans for all educational institutions and a national campaign to promote education. These measures are aimed at ensuring that all young people are able to obtain qualifications according to their individual choices and potential. With regard to employment,there are plans to hire several thousand young people to work in the public and broader public sectors in the next few years. Every summer, the government hires a large number of students and offers end-of-program work experience.

Québec promotes a fairer society, open to the world and anxious to offer a better future for its young people. As part of this process, the Summit participants approved the creation of a *Québec Youth Fund* that will be used specifically to finance social, community, cultural and professional insertion projects for young people. The fourth Summit theme, an open approach to the world, led to the introduction of several international work experience programs and the creation of the Québec-America Youth Office.

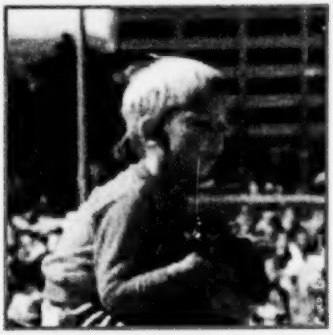


Photo Marie Laberte

Photo Jacques Morin

THE GOVERNMENT'S COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT ORIENTATIONS

Prevention of poverty

Promotes a comprehensive, inter-sector approach in the fight against poverty and exclusion.

Implements an integral set of measures relating in particular to income security, health, education, housing, the family policy, regional development and the status of women.

Ensures the dialogue between all the authorities involved in preparing and implementing these measures.

The family policy

Recognizes the family and different family models as a fundamental collective value.

Gives priority to the needs of the child.

Ensures that families have a living environment offering services in line with their needs, in particular for housing, education, daycare, safety and leisure.

The status of women

Fosters economic independence for women.

Guarantees respect for the physical and psychological integrity of women.

Works to eliminate violence against women.

Recognizes and asserts the value of the collective contribution made by women.

Ensures the place of women in regional development.

A growing place for the social economy

The social economy allows individuals to earn a living by providing local services for others that improve the quality of their habitat. The social economy seeks to develop a model that provides solutions to different social and economic needs not previously met because they were considered less profitable by the traditional economy.

As part of the work done in recent years by the European Union and the Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD), it is generally agreed in Québec that the social economy includes what are known here as independent community action organizations and social economy enterprises. Their often complementary actions are based on the same values of cooperation, solidarity and democracy. What differentiates the independent community action organizations is the fact that they have an exclusively social purpose, as opposed to the market-oriented mission of the social economy enterprises, which must prepare business plans like any other enterprise.

In 1996, the Québec government innovated at its Summit on the Economy and Employment by inviting players from the social economy to join other economic partners in order to seek solutions to the employment problem. The entrepreneurial component of the social economy now comprises nearly 4,800 companies, including 2,300 cooperatives (not counting the major financial and agricultural cooperatives) and some 2,500 non-profit organizations. In all, they employ nearly 50,000 people. Social eco-nomy enterprises work in a wide range of fields, including daycare, community housing, home help, waste recycling, leisure, employment centres for the handicapped, communications, new technology, etc.

The Îlot Fleuri housing cooperative, Québec City

Microcredit at the service of employment

Community credit initiatives offer an innovative solution to the needs of the unemployed, welfare recipients and people without incomes. These initiatives can be divided into two categories,namely loan collectives and community loan funds.

Loan collectives are composed of between 5 and 10 people who do not have access to traditional credit. Their purpose is to help applicants find independent employment based on their respective interests, and to obtain credit generally varying between $1,500 and $3,000.

Community loan funds are composed of monies obtained from the local community and made available to individual or community entrepreneurs who do not meet the criteria of traditional loan institutions. They provide reduced interest rates along with support and monitoring services.

Photo : Pierre Lahoud

Matane

VIABLE CITY AND VILLAGE ENVIRONMENTS

THE CHALLENGES AND INSTRUMENTS OF SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT

The environmental challenges of sustainable development

The close relationship between poverty prevention, better living conditions and environmental issues has been amply demonstrated. All too often, socioeconomic insecurity goes hand-in-hand with a deteriorated urban structure that constitutes a serious obstacle to social integration. It is therefore important to ensure that social development, urban renewal and land use planning efforts complement one another in order to achieve sustainable development.

Québec is aware that the pursuit of sustainable development requires integrated management of natural resources and human activity, as well as a high level of coordination between all players, private and public, government and non-government. Québec society continues to work towards this end,and is seeking to meet the many challenges inherent in community viability and environmental integrity.

One of the major issues underlying city viability is urban growth management. The phenomenon of urban sprawl, characterized by the growth of suburbs to the detriment of rural regions and urban centres, leads to an increase in personal vehicle use, an increase in the time and money spent on personal and public transportation, and a loss of natural spaces.

The main environmental consequences of urban sprawl are a reduction in biodiversity, changes to the moisture balance and soil quality, and an increase in air pollution. Clearly, then, it affects the quality of city life in many different ways. Although Québec has plenty of space at its disposal, it is nevertheless very concerned about these impacts, because its towns and cities are concentrated mainly in the southern portion of its territory, along the St. Lawrence River, where the best farm land and richest ecosystems are located.

Some planet-wide issues that require close international cooperation and collaboration also affect environmental quality. Since the Earth Summit, Québec has declared itself bound by the Convention on Biological Diversity and the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change. Accordingly, regional and local authorities,like the civil society as a whole, are increasingly concerned not only with improving the quality of life in Québec's towns and villages,but also with using surrounding natural areas in a more sustainable and respectful way. Many local actions will have consequential effects on the well-being of local populations and on the planet as a whole.

Urban planning and land use development

Québec's *Act respecting land use planning and development* governs the production and revision of development plans and planning programs for the entire territory. It also introduces formal coordination mechanisms first between the municipalities in a given area, and second between the municipalities and the government, its departments and its agencies.

The regional county municipalities are currently reviewing the development plans adopted in the 1980s, in accordance with government orientations. A development plan is first and foremost a document of intention formulated and designed from an intermunicipal and regional perspective. It defines urban planning boundaries and contains a range of prescriptions and information, in particular on the use (urban, agricultural, forestry, leisure, heritage, ecological, etc.) to be made of different sectors of the territory, and on the location of intermunicipal and government infrastructures and equipment. The local municipalities, for their part, prepare their planning programs and by-laws in accordance with the development plans.

The government's orientations are aimed in particular at consolidating existing urban zones, limiting peripheral development around such zones to sectors that already have basic services, strengthening existing centres of activity and revitalizing older neighbourhoods. The regional authorities translate these orientations into urban planning management measures conducive to sustainable urban development.

In creating metropolitan communities in the two major urban clusters of Montreal and Québec City, the legislator has provided for a new development instrument, the metropolitan management and development plan, which will be drawn up by each authority. This plan will include a strategic vision of economic, social and environmental development in addition to the usual elements of other development plans. It will also establish criteria for urban development in the metropolitan area, as well as urban consolidation, protection of natural resources and optimization of public infrastructures, equipment and services for the community as a whole.

Lastly, thanks to its *Act to preserve agricultural land*, adopted 20 years ago, Québec has a legislative and regulatory framework that allows it to ensure the sustainability and development of agricultural land and activities while protecting environmental diversity. This instrument, the only one of its kind in North America, has played a significant role in harmonizing land use, achieving economic development from agri-food activities and consolidating urban development within certain limits.

Photo : Pierre Lahoud

Joliette region

Photo: Jean Charles Paradis, Lineage

Renewal of infrastructures

Sustainable development means making the best possible use of resources when implementing and maintaining infrastructures. In this respect, the Québec government intends to work on maintaining and improving existing community equipment, infrastructures and services, and on controlling public investments in undeveloped sectors around its towns and cities.

In the year 2000, the governments of Québec and Canada signed an agreement to implement a new five-year financial assistance program that will improve municipal infrastructures and quality of life. Among other things, the program covers repairs to and standardization of water supply, sewer and transportation infrastructures, testing of related new technologies and the implementation of major projects with economic, urban or regional impacts. Under the program, investments must help improve environmental quality, support long-term economic growth and build community infrastructures for the 21st century, by employing the best practices and technologies while leaving room for new approaches. In the agreement, the two governments undertook to invest approximately half a billion Canadian dollars each, for a total of slightly over $1 billion, with an equivalent amount to be provided by local communities and qualifying organizations.

A policy aimed at energy efficiency

Québec is a leader in the field of energy efficiency legislation, especially for new buildings. Alongside its legislative efforts, it also carries out public awareness activities aimed in particular at young people. The public and parapublic sectors have set an example by cutting down their energy bills, especially in government buildings, schools and hospitals. The municipalities have followed suit by launching an impressive number of energy saving initiatives that are all the more effective because they are driven by local or regional communities.

A new energy policy was published in 1996. It is based on four main elements:

(1) providing the people of Québec with the energy services they need at the best possible price;

(2) promoting new economic development methods;

(3) respecting or restoring environmental balance; and

(4) ensuring fairness and transparency.

The Ecological Reference Framework*: An Information Tool for Sustainable Development*

Québec's Ecological Reference Framework is an information, classification and mapping tool that applies equally well to land-based and aquatic ecosystems. It integrates and uses ecological information with a view to achieving sustainable management that is respectful of the land and its resources. Among other things, the reference framework has been used in a joint project by the Canadian Wildlife Service and Québec's *Ministère de l'Environnement* to produce a ***Portrait of Biodiversity in the St. Lawrence River***, which presents current knowledge of the river's plant and wildlife in atlas form. The St. Lawrence River is Québec's largest watercourse.

Local and regional municipalities also use the framework for a variety of purposes, including the production of ecological atlases, intermunicipal land and water management for watersheds, and the protection of landscapes with heritage value.

Energy efficiency has become an excellent way of contributing to the sustainable development of Québec while increasing the availability of energy resources.

The Energy Efficiency Agency, created in 1997, has continued the energy efficiency efforts made in Québec since 1977. Among other things, it has introduced the ***Novoclimat*** program to support energy performance improvements in new residential buildings. Under the program, consumers can build homes that offer more comfort, better indoor air quality and better energy efficiency. It is based on three main elements:

(1) training for contractors, leading to accreditation;

(2) certification of energy performance and compliance with technical requirements following a special inspection;

(3) awareness-raising for purchasers of new homes.

Passenger Transportation in the Greater Montreal Area

In the Greater Montreal area, population growth generated a significant 21% increase in the number of daily journeys per capita in the period 1987 to 1998. In the same period, car use increased by 30%, at the expense of public transportation use, which declined from 24% to 17%, although there has been an improvement in recent years.

The authorities hope to reverse this trend in the near future. For example, the public transportation network for the entire Greater Montreal area is currently undergoing significant development. The new commuter trains recently brought into service were successful beyond expectations from the very beginning, with the result that the number of commuter train and other long-distance transportation users has increased significantly. The Transportation Management Plan published by the government for the Greater Montreal area also provides for a series of major interventions aimed at expanding the public transportation system. The plan includes extensions to the subway network, more commuter trains, light rail systems, lanes reserved for buses and several incentive measures to encourage car pooling and use of public transportation.

Electric train between Montreal and Deux-Montagnes

Effective, environmentally-friendly transportation

Transportation plays a vital role in regional and local socioeconomic development and is an important factor in improving the population's quality of life. Québec is served by a road network of some 183,329 km, including 4,853 km of highways, 128,476 km of roads and 50,000 km of streets, and by a rail network of some 10,845 km.

The phenomenon of urban sprawl, which can be seen around all Québec's major cities,has an impact on passenger transportation dynamics. For example, it shifts the transportation market towards geographical sectors and sectors of activity where public transportation services are non-existent or underdeveloped.

In Québec, there is a trend towards increased use of personal vehicles for transportation.In 1997,cars accounted for nearly 92% of all kilometres travelled on Québec's roads.The popularity of the car has meant that travel in the towns and cities has become more difficult and time-consuming due to traffic congestion and the longer distances imposed by the phenomenon of urban sprawl.

Regional plans have been drawn up to promote integration of transportation development and land use planning. They were made public in 1996 for the Outaouais region and in 2000 for the Montreal and National Capital metropolitan regions.

Québec has also taken action to harmonize transportation use and environmental protection. For example, it has proposed a number of measures to counter the declining quality of city life due to noise pollution. Its *Road Noise Policy* adopted in 1998 is part of this effort, and aims to reduce the noise generated by road transportation infrastructures through two complementary approaches, namely corrective measures and integrated preventive planning.

Lastly, Québec's *2000-2002 Plan of Action on Climate Change* provides for a number of measures aimed at improving energy consumption in the transportation sector. The Energy Efficiency Agency intends to implement three large-scale pilot projects in 2001, designed to reduce the fuel used by intercity trucks, coaches and school buses. The projects should lead to significant reductions in air emissions, since recent studies have revealed a potential for a 30% fuel reduction in the sector. At the same time, the Agency has also undertaken to implement a government directive seeking to reduce fuel consumption by 20% in the government's vehicle fleet before 2005.

NATURAL RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT AND THE FIGHT AGAINST POLLUTION

Air (air emissions)

In Québec, air pollution problems are usually due to industrial and commercial activities and fuel use, especially in the transportation sector. The impacts are felt locally in the form of declining air quality in urban environments, as well as regionally and globally.

Generally speaking, the reduction in emissions of conventional contaminants, i.e. sulphur dioxide (SO_2), particulates, carbon monoxide (CO) and the nitrogen oxides (NO_x) in the period 1974 to 1994 did succeed in improving ambiant air quality, although further progress is still necessary. Indeed, in addition to local concerns, some global issues are now at stake, requiring very close international cooperation and collaboration. One of the international agreements by which Québec officially declared itself bound, namely the Kyoto Protocol on greenhouse gases, will have a particular impact on the energy sector.

CONTROLLING HARMFUL AIR EMISSIONS: QUÉBEC'S COMMITMENTS

Reducing emissions that cause acidification

SO_2 is considered to be the major cause of acidification. In the 1980s, Québec was able to reduce its SO_2 emissions by some 65% thanks to a series of measures.However, the reduction was not enough to allow the resources damaged by acidification to recover. Québec is therefore seeking agreements with the other eastern Canadian provinces in order to continue to reduce certain emissions, including SO_2. The goal is to limit SO_2 emissions to 500,000 tonnes per year, and 90% of this target had been achieved by 1998.

Québec's strategy for ozone depleting substances

In June 1993, Québec passed a regulation respecting ozone depleting substances to reduce air emissions, identify the quantities of such substances sold in Québec and control some of their uses. Thanks to the regulation, it has been possible to reduce emissions quite substantially. In the year 2000, to update its actions, the government adopted a new integrated strategy for climate change and ozone depletion.

The Regional Action Plan on Mercury

In 1998, Québec supported the Canadian government's ratification of a *Protocol on Heavy Metals* drawn up by the United Nations Economic Commission for Europe. In addition, Québec undertook to participate in the implementation of the *Regional Action Plan on Mercury*, the goal of which is to eliminate human-induced discharges of mercury into the environment. Among other things, the action plan aims to reduce air emissions of mercury from incinerators, coal-fired steam plants and non-ferrous metal foundries among others.

Photo : Pierre [illegible]

Hydroelectric dam, Charny

Thanks to hydro-electricity, Québec has achieved an enviable environmental performance in terms of air emissions. Québec's GHG emissions are generated mainly by fossil fuel use in the transportation and industrial sectors, which were responsible for 38% and 33% of emissions respectively in 1998. Reducing its GHG emissions is a major challenge for Québec, because many of the most profitable energy substitutions have already been made.

The Québec government is continuing its efforts to provide the population with good quality air and to help solve transborder and global air pollution problems. For example, within its own territory Québec is involved in preparing and implementing certain international and Canadian agreements concerning climate change issues, acid rain, smog and the ozone layer, and is also developing its own intervention strategies or action plans for those problems.

Saguenay Fjord

THE PRINCIPLES UNDERLYING QUÉBEC'S NEW WATER MANAGEMENT POLICY

Water is part of Québec society's collective heritage.

A community commitment is needed to protect, restore and develop the water resource.

Society's actions towards its water resource must be guided by caution.

Every individual citizen should have access to quality drinking water at an affordable price.

Users should be accountable for the way they use the water resource and for any damage they may cause, based on the user pays/polluter pays approach.

The water resource must be managed in a sustainable and integrated way with a view to achieving efficiency, transparency and fairness.

The gathering and circulation of information on the state of the water resource and the related pressures are vital to an integrated water management approach.

Water (water resources)

Québec's water resource is extremely valuable and one of its major economic assets, since more than 3% of the world's freshwater supply is situated within its boundaries. However, despite its size, the resource is not distributed evenly over the territory, and it is both exhaustible and capable of being altered.

In many regions, the public has begun to use the water resource for leisure purposes. This, in addition to the steady increase in other well-established uses such as farming, industry, energy production and drinking water supplies, has led to a growing number of conflicts.

Following extensive public consultations in 1999, the government was able to form a better idea of water-related problems, identify the principal issues and observe the growing concerns regarding protection of the water resource and the water shortages feared by many countries in the coming decades. In June 2000, the government adopted a general policy framework to serve as a basis for preparing a water management policy that is currently under development.

Drinking water supplies

According to estimates made in Québec, based on residential, commercial and industrial water use and distribution network losses, daily per capita water consumption appears to be 800 litres. Drinking water production and waste water treatment are expensive, but the cost of producing water supplies is not paid directly by consumers, with the result that water is widely perceived to be a free resource. When payment is required, it usually takes the form of a water tax varying between CAN $75 and CAN $325 per year, or a tariff of between CAN $0.22 and CAN $0.55/m^3.

Around 80% of the population is supplied with drinking water from surface sources, and 20% from groundwater sources. Québec introduced regulations governing drinking water in 1984, and since that time water quality has been analyzed regularly by more than 2,000 drinking water system operators. Regulations on the collection of groundwater are currently being prepared in order to protect this important source of drinking water.

Photo : Natalie Jean

Waste water treatment

In the 1980s, the Québec government launched an extensive construction program for municipal waste water interception and treatment infrastructures,which continued until 2000. In the period 1993-1999, water treatment activities increased steadily as the number of treatment stations grew from 328 to 561. In 1999, 97% of those whose homes were connected to a sewer system received this service.

Water treatment facilities are designed on the basis of environmental discharge goals that take into account the dilution capacities of the receiving environment and the quality criteria required for the protection or restoration of other water uses.Treatment levels are therefore consistent with the protection of aquatic ecosystems. Generally speaking, water treatment initiatives have significantly reduced the urban polluting load and have allowed many uses of the aquatic environment to be restored. Water treatment is an integral part of municipal responsibility, and is acknowledged to be essential to the viability of Québec's urban communities.

Soil (ground)

Québec, like all modern western societies, has been unable to escape soil contamination from industrial development. As a result, it has a large number of contaminated sites scattered throughout its territory, and especially in urban environments. This situation is particularly worrying because many of these sites, which are often located in city centres, could easily be reused for other purposes.

In 1996, Québec reviewed all its contaminated sites identified since 1984. A site data management system was introduced in every region. The ***Soil Protection and Contaminated Site Rehabilitation Policy***, reviewed and enriched in 1998, provides for a set of measures that will enable the government to achieve its contamination prevention and site rehabilitation goals.

A rehabilitation program has been introduced for contaminated sites in urban areas. Known as the *Revi-Sols* program, it is expected to produce significant economic spin-offs while promoting technological innovation in the field of environmental decontamination. It is also expected to make a major contribution to urban renewal in downtown neighbourhoods by releasing large tracts of land for other uses.

Riparian environments

Québec's *Environment Quality Act* stipulates that a certificate of prior authorization must be obtained for all work likely to contaminate the environment or modify its quality, and for all work or activities carried out on a regular or intermittent watercourse, lake, marsh, swamp, pond or peat bog.

In 1996, the *Lakeshore, Riverbank, Littoral Zone and Flood Plain Protection Policy* was substantially updated to improve protection standards for riparian environments. The policy sets minimum protection standards for lakes, watercourses and flood plains, and also sets out the division of responsibility between the government and local or regional municipalities.

In 1998, to ensure that standards were applied properly, the *Ministère de l'Environnement* published a good practice guide for the protection of lakeshores, riverbanks, littoral zones and flood plains. Training courses on standard applications were developed for municipal inspectors and government or non-government organizations with activities in riparian environments.

Photo | [illegible]

Banks of the St-Lawrence River

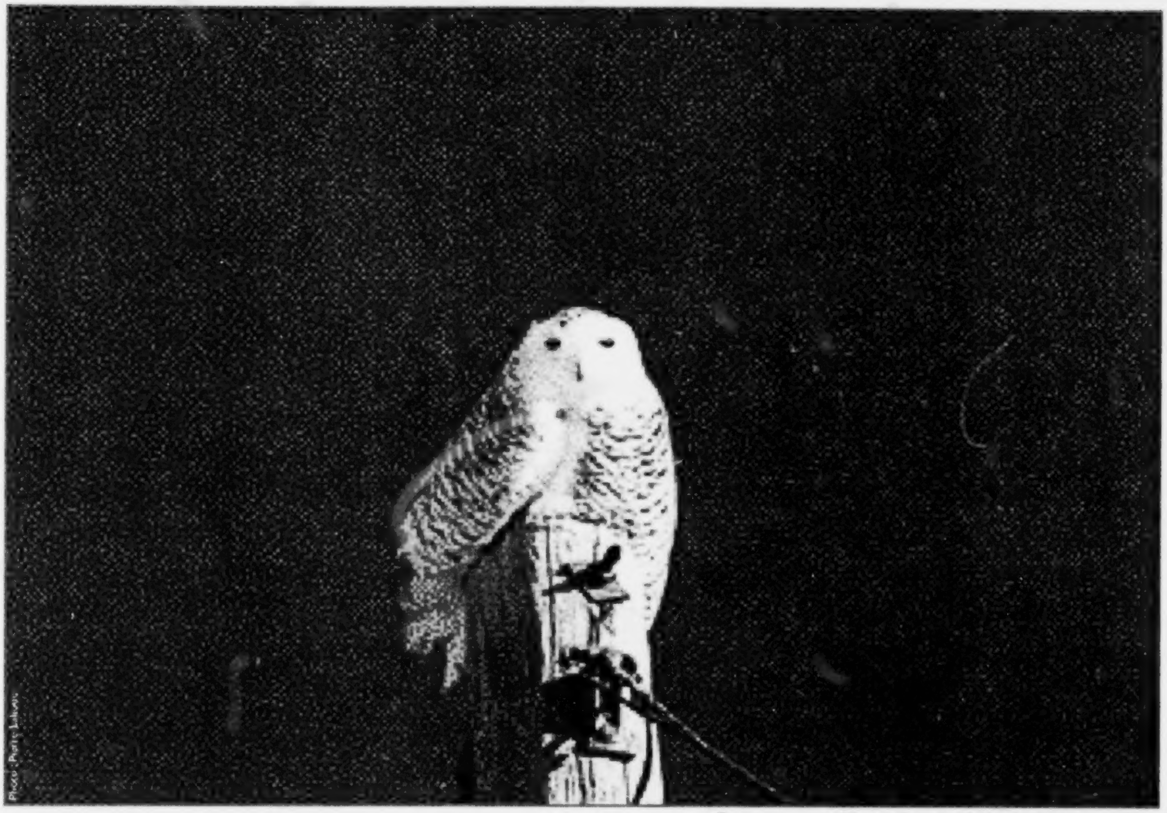


Photo : Pierre Lahoud

The snowy owl (*Nyctea Scandiaca*), Québec's avian emblem

Conservation of biological diversity and natural environments

Urbanization and resource harvesting, especially forestry and agriculture, are the main culprits in the destruction and alteration of ecosystems and habitats. Acid rain and environmental contamination caused by industrial and vehicle emissions are still major contributors to watercourse acidification, a process that threatens both vegetation and wildlife. Climate changes have also forced certain plants to adapt, and careful study of this phenomenon will be required in the future.

In 1993, for each article of the *Convention on Biological Diversity,* Québec already had several significant ins-truments that fell within the scope of the international agreement. In 1996,the government adopted an implementation strategy designed to perfect its tools and mechanisms.

In adopting its *Act respecting threatened or vulnerable species,* Québec obtained an important tool to protect species in difficulty. The Act enables it to pass regulations to protect species and their habitats, and favours the adoption of preventive and protective actions through bequests, acquisitions or agreements with individuals and organizations.

Species designated or likely to be designated as threatened or vulnerable are taken into consideration in environmental assessment procedures, and mitigating or compensatory measures are sometimes required as a condition of authorization for some projects. In addition, the regional county municipalities are invited to protect sites of importance to such species when they review their development plans. Lastly, new rules have been established to allow or prohibit activities in the habitats of threatened or vulnerable species located in public forests.

Photo: Natalie Jean

The La Vérendrye Wildlife Preserve

The creation of protected areas

At the same time, the government acquires land when the opportunity arises, in cooperation with partners from the conservation community. Ecological reserves offering full protection to threatened or vulnerable species can also be created if necessary.

Since 1993, Québec has intensified its efforts to protect natural environments in inhabited areas by creating more than 359 protected areas covering a total area of 2,510 square kilometres. The main purpose of these areas is to protect wildlife habitats, and some have also been designated as ecological reserves. All Québec's national parks are protected areas.

Regional and local authorities are becoming increasingly interested in nature conservation. The urban communities, regional county municipalities and local municipalities have the legal power to create parks, and can also set aside portions of their territory for nature protection in their development plans and planning programs. Many of Québec's leisure, tourist and conservation parks belong to municipalities. So far, actions such as these have tended to apply mainly to inhabited or developed areas, many of which are located along the St. Lawrence River.

TOWARDS SUSTAINABLE MANAGEMENT OF LIVING ENVIRONMENTS

Regional and local approaches

Although there is still room for improvement in environmental management at both the local and regional levels, there are many examples of actions where regional coordination efforts and the involvement of municipal and community organizations have helped introduce sustainability into the process.

Increasingly, Québec's major urban areas are tending to adopt integrated environmental management policies. For example, the Montreal Urban Community, in its environmental policy, has made good use of the powers delegated to it by the government, introducing standards for sewer network management and air quality control that are more stringent than those required by the government.

Québec City, too, is currently preparing an environmental management system that will include a very detailed environmental policy, a public consultation process, performance reports and a plan of action covering an eight-year period (2000-2008). The new system was adopted by the municipal council in December 1999 after more than two years of consultations.

Québec City's environmental policy proposes broad guidelines and more detailed methods for various fields of activity related to natural resources - air, water, soil,wildlife and vegetation - as well as for waste management, snow management, environmental hygiene and land use planning. The policy is based on an integrated approach that will provide better coordination of municipal sustainable management interventions, ensuring that environmental problems under municipal jurisdiction are taken into consideration by all administrative units.

Involvement of community organizations

Non-profit organizations in the environmental field have access to four financial assistance programs, namely the *Action-Environment Program*, the *Environmental Priorities Assistance Program*, the *Assistance Program for Social Economy Enterprises in the Waste Management Sector*, which all subsidize projects, and the *National Groups Statutory Funding Program*, which provides financial assistance for their operations. The *Quebec Sustainable Development Action Fund*, created in 2000, provides an additional source of support.

A number of organizations are involved in protecting and developing the natural environment. For example, the *Éco-Nature* group has organized the *Parc de la Rivière des Mille-Îles* in the centre of Montreal's urban archipelago. The organization responsible for the *Parc d'environnement naturel de Sutton* has created a fragmented regional park in the Sutton area (southern Québec), which boasts hiking trails, an ecological reserve and eight land trusts. The *Coalition du parc linéaire du P'tit train du Nord* worked with four regional county municipalities in the Laurentians region north of Montreal and with several local, regional and government players to preserve a 200-km stretch of disused railway line and convert it into a recreational corridor. This latter

The City of Montreal's Éco-Quartier ***Program***

The City of Montreal has set itself the goal not only of improving the urban framework at the neighbourhood level, but also of reducing the amount of waste for burial by 40%, chiefly through reduction, reuse and recycling strategies. If it is to achieve these ambitious goals, it will need considerable support from its population, which will have to adopt a more ecologically-oriented and civic lifestyle. Accordingly, the municipal authorities have developed a program that promotes sustainable development and relies on the residents' willingness to improve their own living environment through active participation. The program is known as the *Éco-quartier* program.

For the purposes of the program, the municipality is served by 35 community-based éco-quartier organizations that receive financial support to implement the program. Each organization works with residents in its own area, encouraging them to participate principally in four fields of action: (1) permanently improving neighbourhood cleanliness; (2) reducing the amount of waste for burial by intensifying recycling; (3) improving the visual quality of the urban landscape; and (4) improving vegetation in Montreal.

Among other things, the awareness-raising and community involvement activities proposed by the éco-quartier organizations have improved the success rate of the city's selective waste collection and recycling program. For example, in the period 1995 to 1997,the amount of waste salvaged increased from 31,023 tonnes to 50,112 tonnes. In 1998 alone, nearly 6,000 volunteers took part in information and awareness-raising activities or clean-up campaigns.

initiative is just one of a vast network of multifunctional green corridors organized and managed by local and regional authorities in partnership with various community organizations.

In the Sherbrooke region, in the south-western area of Québec, the *CHARMES* Management Corporation is an independent, non-profit organization that promotes the development of aquatic and riparian environments, in particular by restoring and providing public access to riverbanks and lakeshores. Members of the 25-year-old organization work in cooperation with the City of Sherbrooke, residents, various local stakeholders (school boards,stores, industries and other environmental groups) and the Québec government. Although its activities are limited to the Sherbrooke region, the organization's influence and leadership role now extend over a much broader area, and it is even involved in projects with the city of Bogota, in Columbia.

Waste transformation

In 1998, Québec generated some 9 million tonnes of waste, a significant increase from the 7 million tonnes generated in 1989, but the amount sent for elimination remained stable over the period at 5.7 million tonnes. Thus,the amount of transformed waste more than doubled between 1989 and 1998, from 1.3 to 3.4 million tonnes, and by 1998 approximately 38% of all Québec's waste was transformed.

However, the annual amount of waste produced has increased at a much greater rate than Québec's population, and waste elimination activities have been reduced by much less than the initial goal of 50% set for the year 2000. Faced with these disappointing results, the Québec government decided to react energetically in 1998, adopting the *1998-2008 Plan of Action on Waste Management*, which sets the goal of transforming 65% of all salvageable waste every year by the year 2008. The potential for transformation is estimated at 85% of all waste generated.

The Plan of Action entrusts the urban communities and regional county municipalities or their respective associations with responsibility for waste management planning. It also provides for public participation, support for social economy enterprises in the waste transformation sector, optimal use of waste materials as resources, and safer elimination activities.

Current legislation also sets rules governing the salvaging of containers, packaging and printed matter, as well as the salvaging and development of waste oil, oil containers and discarded oil filters. A new regulation on environmental management funds after closure of elimination sites, together with a revision of the solid waste regulations, are also planned for 2001.

Environmental Emergency Coordination

The Québec government works with regional authorities and industry members to deal with environmental emergencies. It has an intervention structure known as *Urgence-Environnement*, composed of teams throughout Québec that are ready to intervene and ensure that proper measures are taken as quickly as possible.The teams can also count on specialist help from Québec's Environmental Analysis Expertise Centre, which has developed expertise in measuring contaminants.

Another example is the Joint Municipal-Industrial Committee, known by its French acronym CMMI, created in 1995 in Montreal's east end.The committee is composed of representatives from several large corporations in the petroleum and chemical sectors. Its goal is to involve municipalities and the general public in managing emergency plans for major industrial accidents. In some cases it can also extend its work to managing the risk of technology accidents and natural disasters.The Montreal area model has served as an example for other cities, several of which now have their own CMMIs.

Prevention of disasters and environmental degradation

Environmental accidents and disasters in towns and cities are usually related to the presence of dangerous facilities using toxic or explosive products, or to transportation accidents involving the same types of substance. Natural disasters are less frequent, but can have significant impacts. Some regions of Québec are regularly affected by floods following the spring thaw or heavy, sustained rainfall. Other sectors experience mudflow slides caused by unstable quick clay.

The Québec government will also require that individuals and organizations whose activities may involve environmental risks inform municipalities of the nature of the dangers and threats to the general public. This will encourage industries, municipalities and regional county municipalities to play a more active role in structuring their prevention and intervention procedures.

The catastrophic flood that occurred in July 1996 in the Saguenay River region, when the waters demolished several dams and destroyed around 1,000 homes and other buildings, provided a stark reminder of the importance of proper safety standards for hydraulic works. The *Dam Safety Act*, adopted in June 2000, was a direct result of this unfortunate event.

Effects of the Saguenay River floods

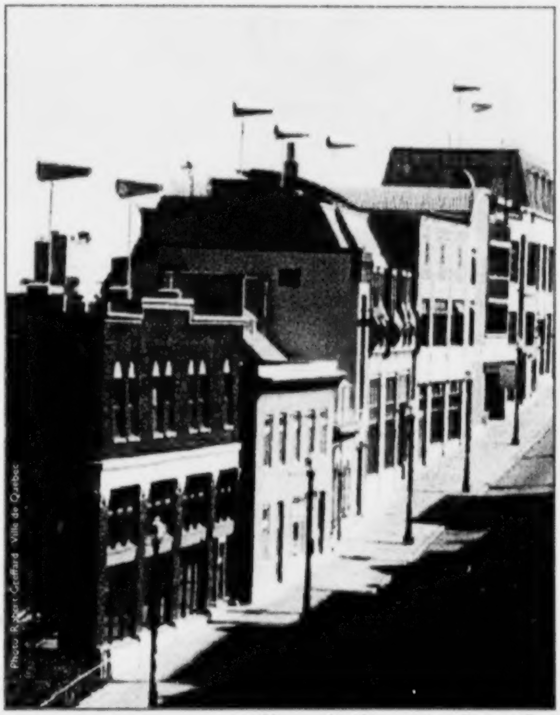


Photo: Robert Greffard, Ville de Québec

Méduse Art Cooperative, Québec City

Preservation of Québec's architectural heritage

Heritage conservation and development are major concerns for the Québec government, and considerable sums of money have been spent for this purpose over the years. So far, nearly 500 buildings have been protected as "historic monuments" under the *Cultural Property Act*, and some 10,000 others are located in historic districts or sites. Several thousand historic artefacts and works of art are also protected by law, as are some exceptional archeological properties and sites.

Where property is protected by law, financial assistance is available for restoration work and heritage activities, and projects initiated by municipalities are also subsidized under a special financial assistance program. At the same time, the government works with city authorities to consolidate existing urban zones and revitalize former downtown areas, where the architectural heritage tends to be concentrated, thus helping to achieve sustainable development of urban environments.

GOVERNMENT ORIENTATIONS FOR THE PLANNING OF LIVING ENVIRONMENTS

(considered in the review of development plans)

Encourage the strengthening of existing urban areas and give priority to the revitalization of downtown areas and older neighbourhoods.

Direct urban growth towards land that can be developed in an economic and environmentally-friendly way.

Promote an integrated approach to the development of an entire urban area.

Contribute to public health, safety and well-being and to environmental protection through a better mix of uses.

Plan public infrastructures and equipment in keeping with planning objectives and environmental protection goals and with a view to viability.

Improve habitat conditions and adapt them to the social and economic context.

Maintain and improve community equipment and services by maximizing their impacts on the urban environment.

Protect, restore and enhance the architectural environment, public spaces and natural resources in urban areas.

Preserve transportation infrastructures, maintain adequate services and support social and economic development by taking advantage of the positive aspects of different transportation modes.

Plan the management and development of farm land by giving priority to environmentally-friendly farming activities in farming zones, so as to promote regional economic development.

Encourage the enhancement and efficient, profitable use of all energy resources and maximize their economic spin-offs in the regions.

Protect the natural heritage and preserve wildlife and plant species and their habitats.

Ensure the sustainability and development of forest resources by considering environmental diversity.

Develop a comprehensive management approach to achieve multiple use of Québec's land heritage, a better mix of uses and joint action by the various partners.

In 1999, to improve its interventions in this area, Québec asked an advisory group to prepare a *Cultural Heritage Policy.* The notion of heritage has been extended in Québec to include recognition and orchestration of all stakeholders within what can be described as a "heritage system". New sectors, including landscapes and intangible identity-related elements, will also be considered in the policy.

A new division of responsibility between the general public and the government is required to clarify their respective roles with regard to the local, regional and national heritage. Among other things, closer partnerships must be forged with municipalities. Priority aspects will include questions relating to the conservation of collections, archives, inventories of heritage buildings, classification, consideration for surrounding landscapes, restoration, recycling of buildings and heritage enhancement.

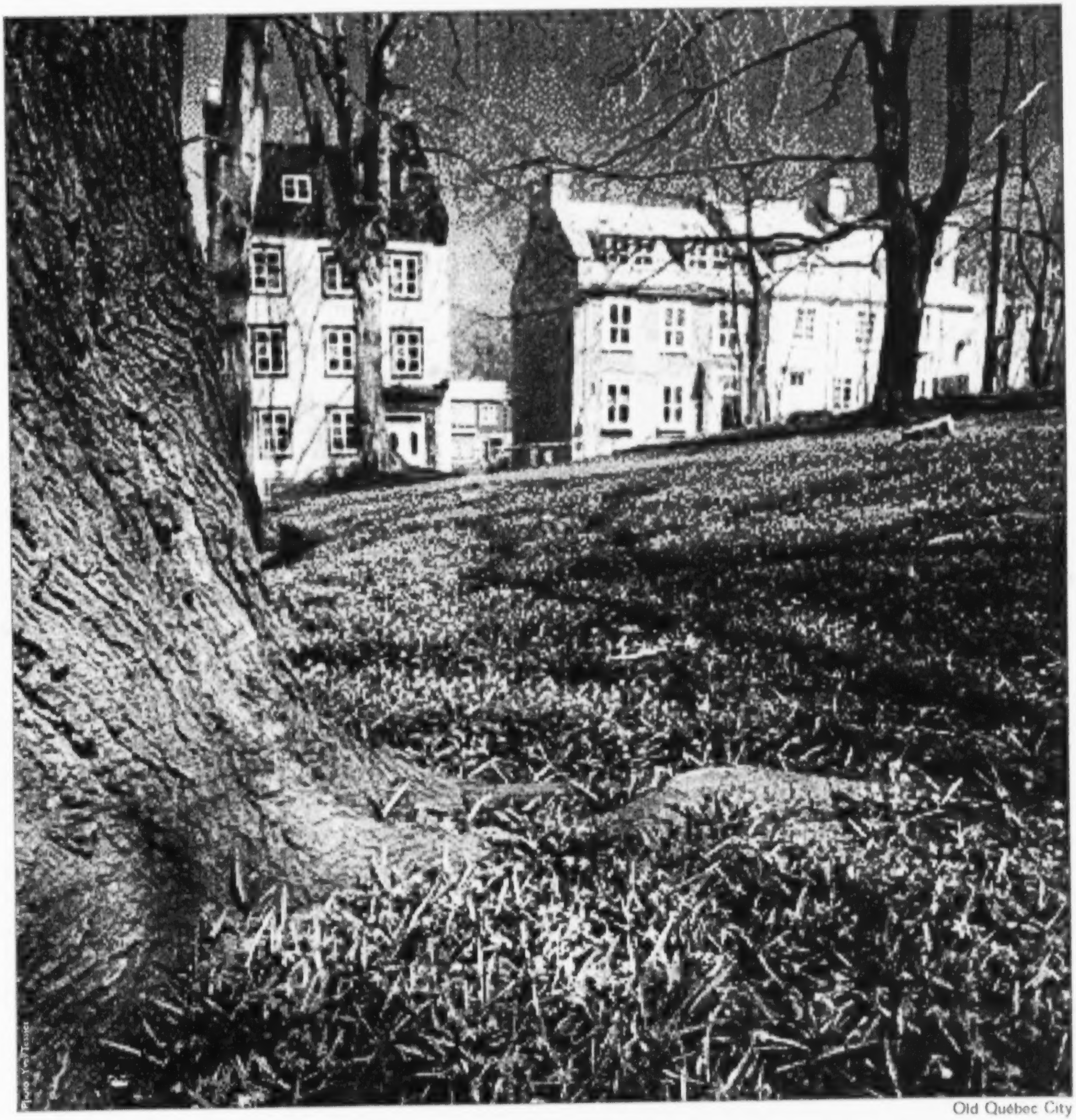


Photo Yves Tessier

Old Québec City

Montreal

GOVERNANCE AND PARTNERSHIP

STRENGTHENING LOCAL INSTITUTIONS

Renewing local governance

The profound economic and social changes facing Québec society in the future will require greater solidarity in municipal governance and a better capacity among local communities to face up to new issues. This will be particularly true in the areas of land use planning, environmental protection and economic and social development.

The Québec government is currently involved in an extensive reform process, begun several years ago, aimed at consolidating its local communities and strengthening its urban centres. Through the reform, the State has asserted its intention to modernize the municipal system and has also recognized the key role played by local communities in the social, economic and cultural development of Québec.

The principal goals of the process are to enable local communities to form a shared vision of their future, to introduce optimal economic development conditions (by forming strong social and economic centres and reinforcing supra-local authorities), to make the municipal sector more efficient in local public service delivery, and lastly to distribute the tax burden more fairly among taxpayers. The process comprises two complementary measures, namely consolidating local municipalities and strengthening urban areas and supra-local authorities.

Consolidating local municipalities

The Québec government published its *Local Community Consolidation Policy* in 1996. The first phase of the policy, implemented immediately after publication, involved consolidating the smaller municipalities, in particular those forming natural communities with less than 10,000 inhabitants. Half the 400 municipalities covered by this measure had been consolidated by January 1, 2001.

A number of legislative provisions were also adopted in June 2000, introducing new municipal consolidation mechanisms for use by the government and the municipalities. Québec's municipal commission now has the power to examine potential consolidations and make recommendations to the government. If it decides to recommend consolidation, the commission must hold public consultations.

Under the new provisions, the government can require municipalities to consolidate, and can appoint a conciliator to help them. It can also order consolidations and form transitional committees to facilitate the creation of new cities.

Adjustments have also been made to the rules governing labour relations, in order to provide for an ordered and accelerated process to ensure the integration of employees and the introduction of new collective agreements.

Strengthening urban areas and supra-local authorities

The steps taken so far to strengthen Québec's urban areas have involved its three largest metropolitan areas, namely Montreal, Québec City and Outaouais (including Hull).

Under the reform, the Montreal and Québec regions have their own metropolitan communities, each covering a territory corresponding more or less to their respective metropolitan census areas. The new communities have strategic powers in areas such as land use planning, economic, tourist and cultural development and international economic promotion.They are also responsible for formulating orientations relating to metropolitan public transportation and equipment, infrastructures, activities and services. Among other things, they will be required to prepare metropolitan development plans with which local municipalities must comply when carrying out their own urban planning and zoning activities. The plans must be submitted for public consultation before being approved by the government.

A major municipal consolidation process is now underway in the Montreal, Québec and Outaouais metropolitan regions. It will result in the creation of five new cities, to be known as Montreal, Québec City, Longueuil, Lévis and Hull-Gatineau, which will replace the current 64 separate municipalities. Consolidation of the other three urban areas with more than 100,000 inhabitants, namely Sherbrooke, Chicoutimi-Jonquière and Trois-Rivières, will take place in subsequent years,creating three new cities to be known as Sherbrooke, Saguenay and Trois-Rivières.

QUÉBEC'S NINE LARGEST CITIES
as of January 1, 2002 *

CITIES	**POPULATION** (2001)
Montreal	1,795,844
Québec City	510,500
Longueuil	382,838
Laval	349,910
Hull-Gatineau	225,345
Saguenay	154,676
Sherbrooke	144,284
Lévis	124,487
Trois-Rivières	111,810

* Laval plus the eight new municipalities to be created in 2001.
Source Ministère des Affaires municipales et de la Métropole

At the same time, the government is continuing its reform of urban areas with between 10,000 and 100,000 inhabitants. In most cases, Québec's municipal commission or one of its agents has been asked to make recommendations to the government concerning the possibility of consolidation. The process of strengthening the regional county municipalities began with a review of their powers, methods of representation, decision-making and funding. The process is expected to culminate in legislative amendments by the end of 2001.

Québec City's Neighbourhood Plans: Active Consultation

The neighbourhood planning approach allows Québec City's residents to identify priority interventions and establish broad development orientations for their local environment. The approach consists in (1) establishing a diagnosis of the neighbourhood with the population; (2) selecting the elements to be protected and maintained in the neighbourhood; (3) identifying problems and the best ways of overcoming them; (4) working with the population to establish priorities; and (5) monitoring the neighbourhood plan.

The City's departments must establish their priorities based on local priorities established jointly with the population and approved by the municipal council. Most people are sensitive to their environments and can propose subtle but important improvements to the suggestions made by professional planners. For example, the city's residents asked for small public spaces and green areas in each neighbourhood, to serve as meeting points for local inhabitants. The neighbourhood planning approach enables the population to play a leading role in developing the city. For the city authorities, this tool has proved to be a key element in promoting social cohesion, strengthening the sense of belonging and developing a shared vision for the future of both the neighbourhoods and the city as a whole.

Photo : Ville de Trois-Rivières

City Hall, Trois-Rivières

Consolidating municipal funding

In June 2000, the Québec government signed an initial financial and fiscal agreement with the associations representing municipal authorities, followed by a complementary agreement in October 2000. Under these agreements, the government has established a series of measures granting additional funding of CAN$1.5 billion to the municipalities over a six-year period. It has also revised some of its financial assistance programs, including the municipal equalization program, and introduced new methods of funding the municipalities, including levies on property development.

The current municipal reorganization also includes tax measures to ensure that the fiscal burden is spread more evenly between the taxpayers of the same municipal area or regional municipal county. The measures include corrective provisions to prevent situations in which a single municipality would have to pay the entire cost of services or amenities also used by neighbouring municipalities. In future, the financial contribution of local municipalities to social housing, supra-local equipment and amenities and, in some cases, growth of the property tax base, will be divided across the entire urban area or region instead of being borne by a single municipality.

The borough: a new decision-making and consulting authority closer to the population

In an attempt to preserve specific local features and maintain a sense of belonging to a local community, the territories of the new cities of Montreal, Québec City, Longueuil, Saguenay, Sherbrooke and Lévis will be divided into boroughs. Each borough will have its own council composed of locally-elected representatives.

The borough councils will have decision-making and consulting responsibilities. For example, it will be their job to establish and manage certain local services, including parks, cultural, sports and recreation facilities as well as sports, social and cultural activities. They will also be responsible for economic, community and social development, waste collection, local road maintenance, the issuing of certain permits, public information and public consultations on zoning by-laws. The borough councils will be able to submit opinions and make recommendations to the city council, especially with regard to budgets, management of municipal services, preparation of or changes to the planning program and by-laws, and any other question, local or otherwise, submitted to them by the city council.

The borough councils will not, however, have the power to tax their citizens. Instead, they will receive an operating allowance from the city council, which they must spend on local services. With the city council's approval, they may improve certain services in their own territories, and the city council will impose a special tax or borough tax on their residents, in addition to the general property tax, to pay for those improvements.

The boroughs are much more than simple administrative divisions. They are democratic authorities representing the local population, with consulting and decision-making powers. They are also responsible for the provision of borough-based local services. Thus, residents of the new cities will maintain a certain amount of control over the decisions that have the most direct impact on their daily lives and can confidently develop a sense of belonging to their boroughs.

Montreal's Women in the City *Program*

The *Women in the City* program was launched in 1990 to meet the specific needs of women in pursuing the goal of male-female equality. One of the priorities of the program, which involves partners from the public and community sectors, was to make women feel and be safer in the city's streets. This was done by introducing development criteria conducive to women's safety, and by producing a *Safety Guide for Women in the City*. Hundreds of women took part in exploratory walks to assess safety levels, and suggestions were then made for improvements to the urban environment that would make the streets safer for women (and for the rest of the population).

In addition, Montreal has continued its activities with various regional and local partners to increase the number of women in local and regional decision-making authorities and to implement a gender-based approach to local and regional management. For example, research revealed some significant differences in access to leisure activities for men and women, and especially for teenagers, confirming the need for targeted strategies aimed at women of all ages and all origins.

Since *Habitat II*, Montreal has begun to cooperate internationally with the *Women in the City* network, reiterating its commitment to promoting male/female equality on March 8, 1999, by ratifying the world declaration of the International Union of Local Authorities (IULA) on women in local government.

Québec City's Innovative Approach to Women's Participation

The *Women in the City* Advisory Commission created by the City of Québec in 1993 is a forum in which elected representatives, ordinary citizens and members of the municipal authority make recommendations to the council concerning the city's major orientations, policies and programs aimed at improving the status of women.

The Commission has produced a series of analysis tools and instruments, including a kit entitled *The Exploratory Walk - A Community Urban Safety Initiative*. It has also asked that tools be developed to analyze situations by gender, in order to obtain an objective assessment of how municipal policies and programs affect women.

In addition, the Commission has introduced a measure that allows members of advisory bodies to obtain reimbursements of day care costs related to their activities. And last but not least, the city's Neighbourhood Boards are now bound by a rule stipulating equal representation for men and women.

CIVIC PARTICIPATION

Public participation in land use planning and development decisions

Public consultation and approval mechanisms have received special attention in the ongoing process of updating the *Act respecting land use planning and development*. The goal is to facilitate public participation while simplifying procedures.

Among other things, the review has focused on the role of the state in establishing objectives for public participation in land use planning and development decisions, possible ways of improving transparency in the decision-making process, and possible goals, procedures and consultation mechanisms or authorities. The general public, local elected representatives, municipal civil servants and planning specialists have all been involved in the review.

The role of women in decision-making authorities

The Québec government is particularly aware of the need for more women to hold decision-making positions in public affairs. In 1999, it launched a program entitled *Equality in Decisions*, which provides financial support for projects implemented by local and regional non-profit organizations aimed at increasing the number of women in decision-making positions. In the first two years of its existence, the program financed a total of 81 projects throughout Québec.

Generally speaking, some progress was made in the period 1995 to 2000, with the result that women are now better represented in most of Québec's decision-making authorities at the national, regional and local levels, as the following table shows.

Photo : Paul-Guy Ledert

The Situation of Women in Québec's Principal Places of Governance

SECTORS	1995	1996	1997	1998	1999	2000
Members of Parliament	18.4%	19.2%	20.2%	21.8%	23.2%	23.2%
Ministers	31.5%	22.7%	22.7%	22.7%	33.3%	33.3%
Mayors	9.3%	9.1%	9.4%	10.1%	10.4%	10.4%
City Councillors	19.9%	20.1%	21.7%	22.4%	23.1%	23.1%
Regional Development Boards*	15.2%	17.1%	18.0%	20.9%	19.4%	26.0%
Local Development Centres*	---	---	---	24.9%	24.3%	24.6%
School Board Chairs	39.0%	39.0%	39.0%	48.4%	48.4%	48.4%
School Commissioners	46.4%	46.4%	46.4%	45.0%	45.0%	45.0%
Regional Health Boards*	33.8%	33.8%	33.8%	36.9%	36.9%	36.9%

* *On boards of directors*

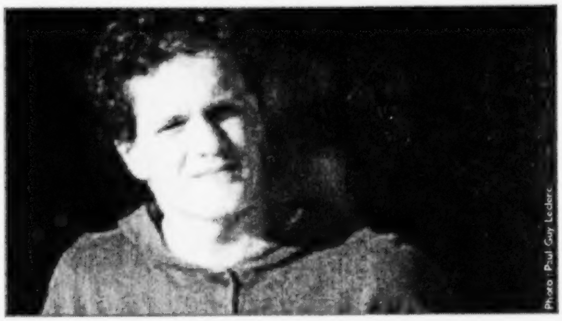


Photo : Paul Guy Leclerc

Significant initiatives to promote youth participation

The importance of involving young people in decisions is now recognized. Québec has created youth forums in each of its regions to promote youth participation in democratic life. The forums are permanent authorities composed of young people aged 12 to 30. The members are elected by youth involved in various regional organizations. Their mission is to provide young people with an opportunity to discuss and generate youth projects and to defend youth priorities at the Regional Development Board level.

The *Montreal Youth Issues* project, officially launched in September 2000, gives teenagers experience of democracy through participatory creative expression and theatrical intervention activities. The goal is to increase civic participation by young people through a consultation process involving municipal elected representatives that will decompartmentalize traditional consultation approaches in a way that better reflects youth culture. A "legislative theatre" will be held every year at the city hall, after a consultation tour of city neighbourhoods.

Québec City has created a Youth Advisory Commission to advise its municipal authorities on all questions likely to be of interest or concern to young people. In addition, young people aged 16 to 25 have a seat on all the municipal authority's advisory committees, to ensure that youth concerns are taken into consideration in all the city's activity sectors.

PUBLIC, PRIVATE AND COMMUNITY PARTNERSHIPS

Partnerships for better housing

Public, private and community partnerships are essential to community development. The housing sector provides an excellent example of the type of partnership approach involving economic and social stakeholders that is so characteristic of Québec society.

Housing is one of the most important economic sectors. In the last decade, housing investments have accounted for between 5% and 6% of all goods and services produced in Québec. More than 8,000 companies are active in the residential sector, providing 25,000 direct jobs and more than 100,000 indirect jobs.

The *Société d'habitation du Québec* (SHQ) has extensive expertise in the housing sector and an excellent knowledge of the sector's partners. As the main government stakeholder in the sector, it plays a leading role in public efforts to support housing industry development and adapt it to the public's needs, and also has a social mission that it carries out in close cooperation with municipal, community and private stakeholders.

Bonneville

Partnerships with industry

The SHQ helps industry in its efforts to improve productivity and adapt to new domestic and foreign market requirements. In addition, it supports joint public and private initiatives in the housing field, promotes research and development and in so doing acts as a catalyst among all industry partners.

A number of measures have been introduced to help achieve these objectives. For example, the *Development Support Program for Quebec's Housing Industry*, which came into force in 1997, was designed to promote groups formed for market development purposes, enhance the industry's quality standards, speed up the introduction of new technology and the development of new housing concepts, and promote Québec's expertise abroad.

Partnerships with community organizations

With regard to housing assistance, Québec counts on the exceptional contribution of its agents, including the local municipalities and regional county municipalities, which are key partners in the administration of most of its programs. The public sector also works with non-governmental organizations in the community sector. By diversifying partnerships, strengthening the field-based approach and transferring expertise in both directions, it is able to ensure the production and management of housing units and offer housing-related services that are fully adapted to each community's individual requirements.

As part of its *Support Program for Community Organizations*, aimed mainly at associations of low rental housing tenants, the SHQ is involved every year in more than a hundred partnerships with different community sector players. These partnerships support and promote initiatives, research and innovation to meet the needs of underprivileged households. The program also provides operational support for rights defence organizations and joint action by communities affected by housing issues.

The partnerships promote cooperation and the development of public and non-governmental networks for client groups with special housing needs, including families, the elderly, women in difficulty, young people, the homeless and new immigrants. The SHQ therefore serves as a point of reference and support agency for all community sector players and partners with an interest in housing in Québec.

GOVERNMENT ORIENTATIONS REGARDING LOCAL GOVERNANCE

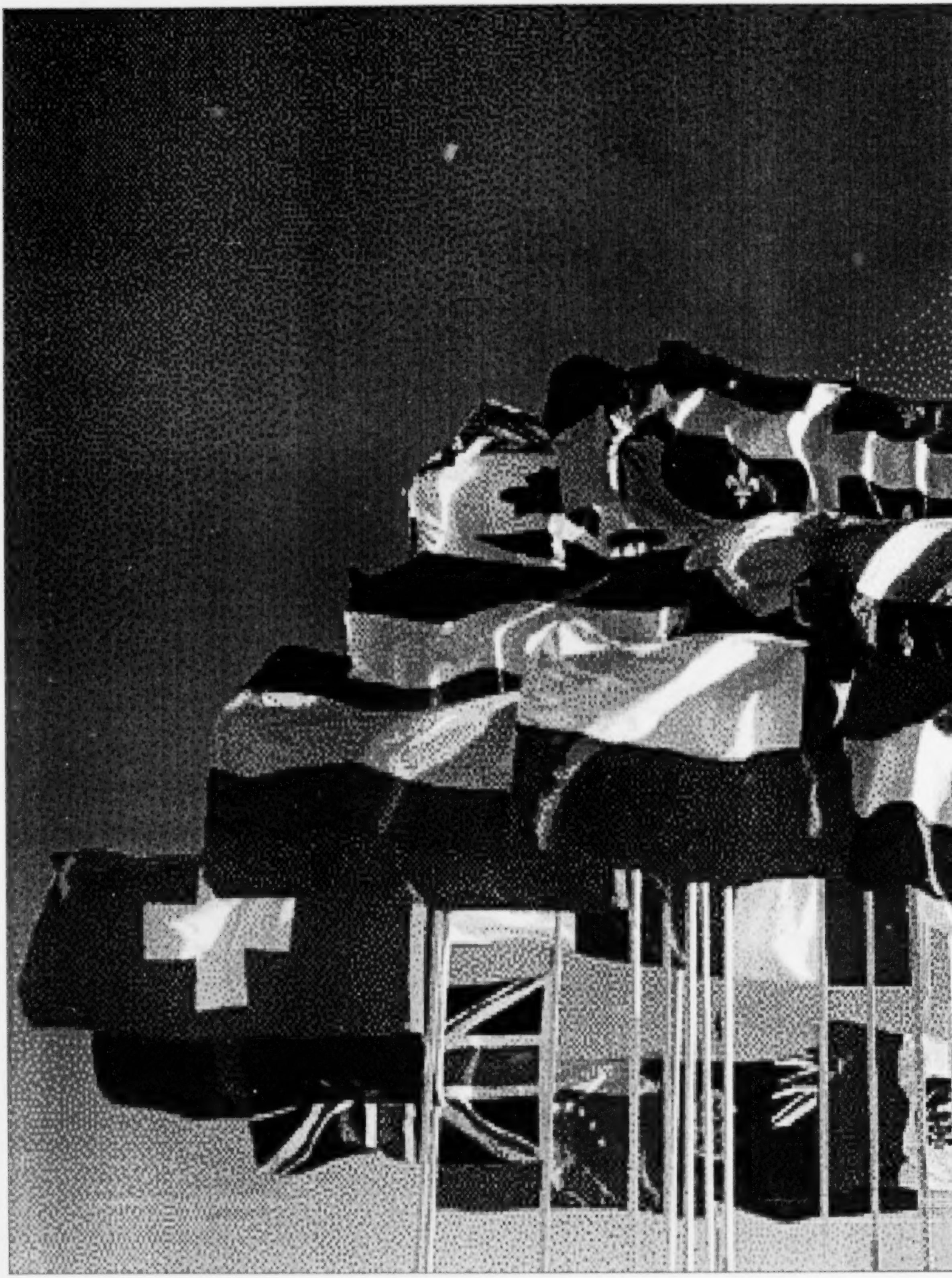
Providing Québec with dynamic, modern and effective municipal institutions able to face new issues:

- Strengthen urban areas and regional county municipalities
- Promote consolidation of local municipalities
- Ensure the development of viable communities throughout Québec, but especially in rural areas
- Strengthen local democracy

Supporting the development of a dynamic, integrated Greater Montreal area that is competitive at the international level

Renewing methods for the management and funding of municipal authorities:

- Streamline and simplify municipal legislation
- Renew land use planning and development methods
- Preserve and modernize municipal infrastructures
- Modernize and adapt the management and funding methods of municipal authorities



INTERNATIONAL COOPERATION AND INTERNATIONAL PARTNERS

INTERNATIONAL COOPERATION

Québec's involvement in international cooperation

Québec demonstrates its presence on the international stage by entering into many political, social, economic and cultural agreements, both bilateral and multilateral, and by declaring itself bound by several United Nations conventions.

All human societies depend on one another for their advancement. The Québec government's international relations policy therefore recognizes that Québec's progress relies to a large extent on that of other states, including developing countries, and it expressly sets out its support for those states. Its actions are directed at the goal of forming true partnerships with other countries, to promote joint development.

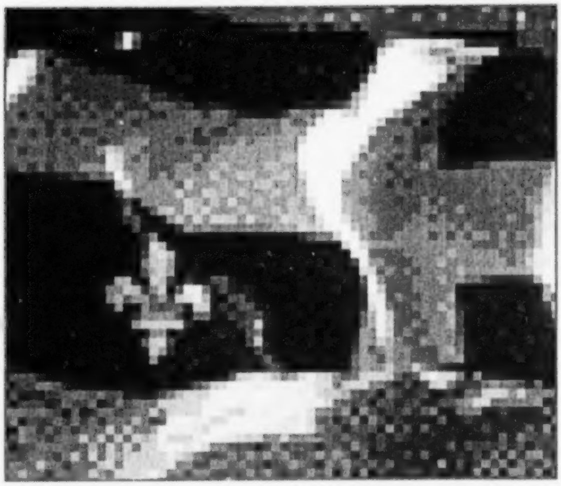
The goal of improving habitat is one that transcends geographical boundaries, language barriers and even cultural differences. Québec believes it can benefit from the knowledge of other societies that apply habitat improvement policies and practices different from its own. The benefits of an active presence in the international community include the opportunity to share the experience of others, enrich existing expertise and identify avant-garde practices.

International aid

Québec has its own International Aid Secretariat known by its French acronym SAIQ. The SAIQ's mandate is to stocklist government and para-government actions in the field of international aid, coordinate government actions in the field of international humanitarian aid, implement the necessary mechanisms and manage the government's various aid programs, including the *International Humanitarian Action Aid Program*, the *Québec Without Borders* program and the delegated fund of the Department of International Relations and the Québec Association of International Cooperation Organizations.

In the field of international aid, the SAIQ's programs touch on different aspects of world habitat. The *International Humanitarian Action Aid Program* helps meet basic needs in the fields of education, health, social and community organization, human rights and democracy. It also has an emergency component that provides assistance for the victims of conflicts, catastrophes and natural disasters.

In 1997, for example, the SAIQ helped fund new housing for displaced populations in the African Great Lakes region. Through its involvement with the victims of hurricane Mitch and field training sessions with the Québec Without Borders organization, it has also been able to create links with the Nicaraguan partners of Canada World Youth, who are planning to implement a micro-factory producing PVC homes marketed by a company from Québec. In Haiti, one of the SAIQ's partners, *Les Oeuvres MIR Inc.*, plans to oversee a project to develop technical training throughout the country, including some programs in the habitat and environment sectors.



International educational partnerships

In 1999, the Québec government introduced its *Education Internationalization Program*, the goals of which are to promote an open attitude to the world among young people, to help young people obtain the skills and abilities required by internationalization, to encourage the learning of modern languages and to export Québec's educational expertise. Several hundred projects have been implemented in the years since the program was first created. Québec has signed nearly 70 educational agreements with countries and with regional and international organizations to help improve human resources training. Exemption and merit scholarships are also offered to foreign students.

Other government initiatives target specific French-speaking countries. For example, Québec provides training management expertise for Moroccan companies as part of a cooperative project with that country. Seminars and field training have been offered to raise awareness of the different models developed by Québec for the planning, organization and management of vocational and technical training. In the last two years, several exploratory field visits have also been organized, enabling Moroccan executives and experts to learn about the systems used in Québec to manage public employment and poverty prevention services.

A university partnership cooperation and development program known as the *Vietnam Urban Management Program* has been implemented by the Université de Montréal and Hanoi University. Funded by the Canadian International Development Agency, the program is designed to develop skills and cooperative contacts in the urban development management sector. In the five years since the program was first launched, the two universities have exchanged professors and researchers, dispensed training to Vietnamese trainers and municipal managers, developed on-site applications of urban management concepts promoted by international agencies, and carried out research aimed at adapting technologies produced by developed countries to suit the context and needs of Vietnam.

INTERNATIONAL EXCHANGES

Mutually beneficial economic exchanges

Québec companies working in the housing and urban development sectors are turning increasingly to foreign markets to achieve growth and progress. To consolidate their presence on these markets, the firms forge mutually beneficial relations with their local partners. The products and systems they export are, in most cases, accompanied by technical training for the local workforce and local contractors, and in some cases by transfers of technology. The companies may even assemble some of their components in the recipient country, to create local jobs. Where volumes are sufficient, some may open factories to manufacture their houses or components on site.

It is also in this spirit that the Québec government, in its efforts to support the industry's development and improve its products, welcomes foreign delegations, takes part in missions and exhibitions abroad, and signs agreements with other governments on the management of housing stocks, funding conditions, home ownership, workforce training and the implementation and funding of cooperative housing projects. Several such agreements have already been signed with foreign governments, including South Africa (Western Cape province, Blaawberg municipality), Cameroon, Chile, China (Samara province, cities of Beihai and Dalian), Djibouti and Russia (Khabarousk, Moscow and St. Petersberg).

Québec's housing companies are ingenious and creative, and are also in touch with their customers' needs. As a result, they have been able to develop building systems that are widely acknowledged for their quality, adaptability, speed of installation, high level of comfort and resistance to extreme climatic conditions and earthquakes. Québec's housing industry exports wood-framed or light steel-framed houses, prefabricating modules or panels in its own factories or building them on site. It also exports log houses, sandwich panel houses, insulated polystyrene block concrete form construction houses, insulated PVC block construction houses and wood-reinforced stabilized clay houses.

In addition, Québec's companies produce home components such as doors and windows, kitchen cupboards, hardwood floors and wood trim, as well as other components such as wall curtains, roof trusses and floor beams. They have developed a solid expertise in recycling, restoring and converting abandoned industrial, institutional and commercial buildings for residential use.

Québec's housing sector firms are active in developed countries and also in developing and emerging countries and those changing to a market-based economy. For example, they are able to meet the special needs of medium-to-high range house buyers in the United States, Japan, France, Germany, Poland, Russia, Slovakia, the Czech Republic, Chile and Argentina, and at the same time they provide concrete solutions to the tremendous need among low-income populations for modest, economic, good quality housing in Brazil, the Dominican Republic, South Africa, Cameroon, Nigeria, Turkey and Djibouti.

Przy Ogrodowej housing project in Piaseczno, a suburb of Warsaw

Participation in city networks, local authority associations and local initiative organizations

The City of Montreal acts as the spokesperson for the Global Assembly of Cities (GAC) which met at the City Summit in Istanbul in 1996. Since then, it has continued and multiplied its efforts to share its urban expertise on the international stage, signing more than 21 cooperation agreements with cities in developing and developed countries that have, in turn, generated a significant number of exchange projects. It intends to continue its cooperation with partner cities in Asia, Africa and Latin America, both bilaterally and multilaterally.

In addition to sharing information and expertise, the City is also involved in joint environmental projects, including the creation of ecological neighbourhoods (Casablanca, Marrakesh and Santiago), training for city managers (Beihai, Shanghai and Yunan) and workplace training for local economic development trainees (Lyon, Santiago and Tunis). The resources required to support these activities are obtained from the City's own budget, and from contributions made by the government, a range of economic stakeholders, the Canadian International Development Agency and the Federation of Canadian Municipalities.

In addition to its cooperative activities with other cities, Montreal is active in a number of city associations and works hard to promote city causes on the international stage. The Mayor of Montreal is Executive Vice-President and Treasurer of *Metropolis*, an association of more than 68 cities on five continents. Since 1999, he has also been the association's representative with the World Bank, sitting on the advisory committee for the *Cities Alliance+* program, which aims to reduce urban poverty and introduce viable, fair urban policies.

As a member of *Metropolis*, Montreal coordinates an international commission on urban poverty reduction strategies. The commission will be publishing a guide for use by cities wishing to make structured interventions in the areas of poverty and underprivileged neighbourhood rehabilitation.Montreal is also a member of other municipal networks, including the International Association of French-Speaking Mayors, known by its French acronym AIMF, and the International Union of Local Authorities (IULA). It contributes to the activities of these organizations by sending representatives to various working committees, including the IULA Women's Committee, which wrote the IULA World Declaration on Women in Local Government. In addition, Montreal is involved in the development of the Women in the City international exchange and cooperation networks. It is also the head office of the International Institute for the Management of Major Cities, whose mission is to provide training and development activities for local elected representatives.

THE GOVERNMENT'S INTERNATIONAL COOPERATION ORIENTATIONS

Promote innovation and an open approach to the world among all international cooperative stakeholders.

Promote Québec's expertise and use it to identify solutions to national and international problems.

Mobilize players from different sectors and different levels around projects that will significantly improve the quality of life of citizens.

Include habitat-related issues in the development priorities for international relations and exchanges.

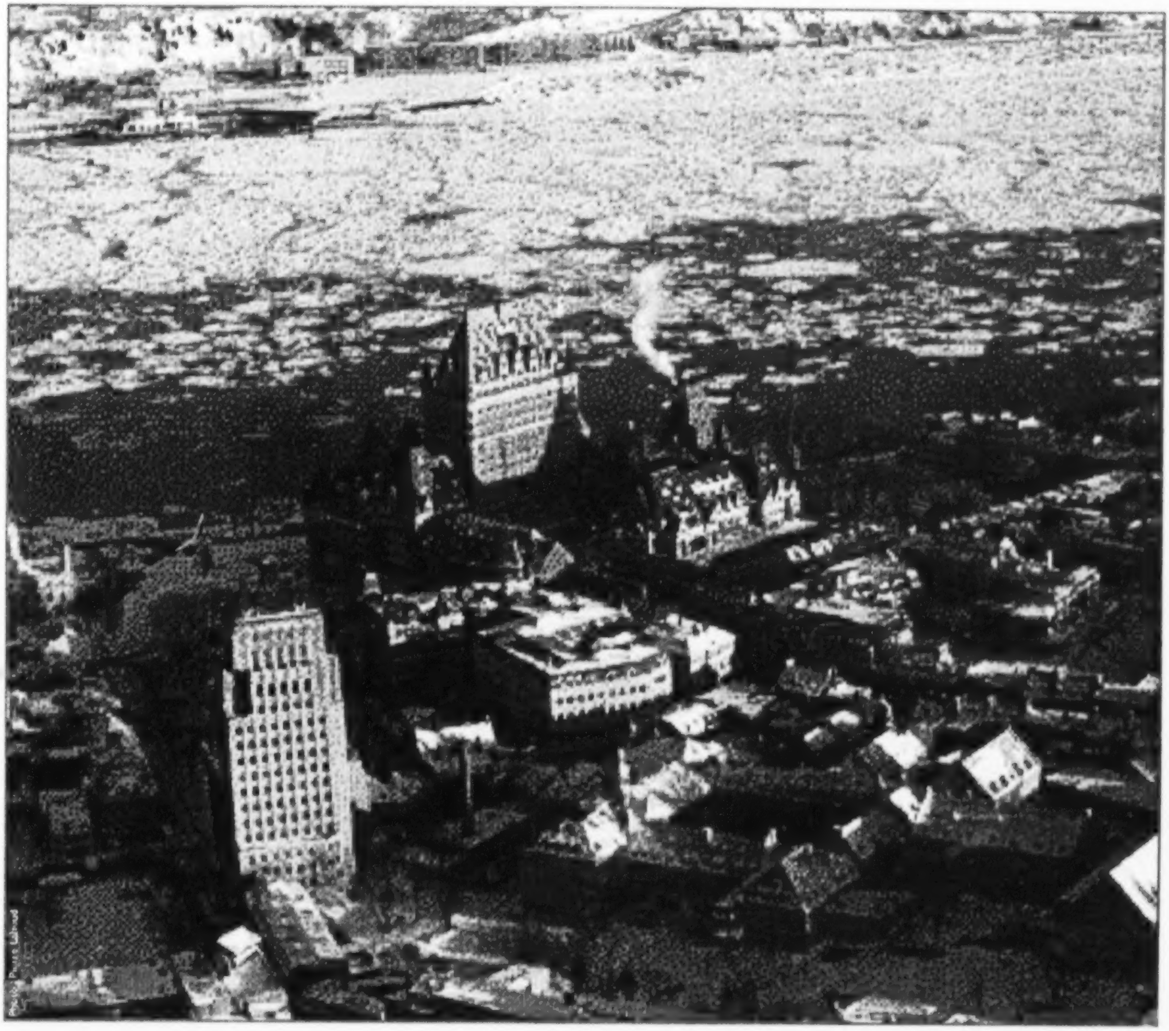


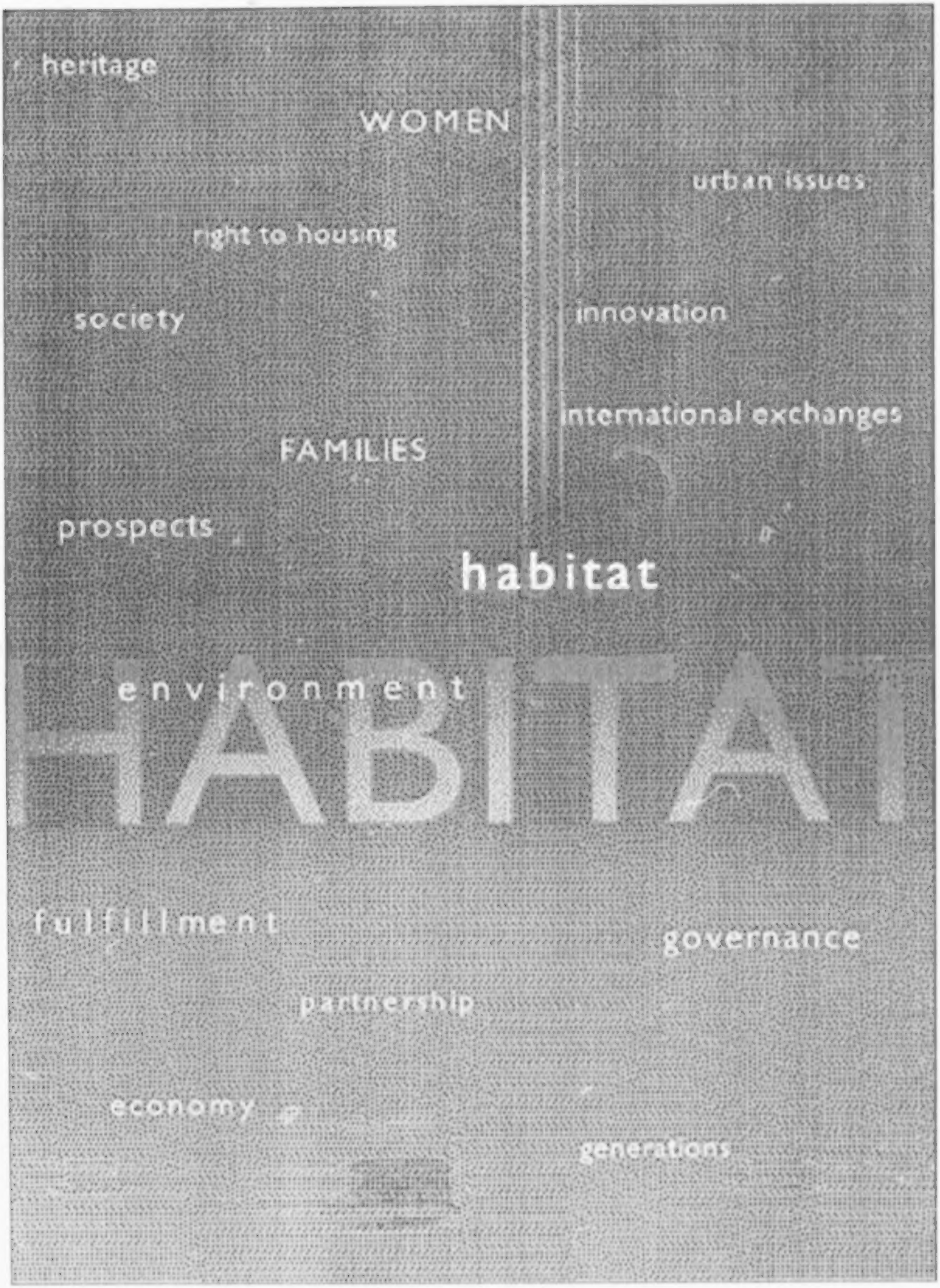
Photo Pierre Lahoud

Old Québec City

Québec City, for its part, is involved in about ten international partnerships. It favours arrangements that are to its own benefit as well as to the benefit of its partners, including twinning agreements between cities, friendship pacts and cooperation agreements on heritage, culture, methods of governance, public consultation, economic development, vocational training, environment, geomatics and urban planning. Its neighbourhood planning experience is particularly sought-after in these partnerships.

Recently, Québec City was asked to help prepare a report on the state of the city of Zahlé in Lebanon, and to propose ways for the authorities to rebuild the urban environment and restore it to its pre-war lustre. A concept plan for a park was one of the products of the exchange, which will continue with the creation of links between Laval University in Québec City and the City of Zahlé. Another partnership has been formed between Québec City, Laval University and Vietnam in order to produce an analysis of densification in certain areas of Hanoi.

Québec City is also a member of some major world networks. For example, it is active in the Organization of World Heritage Cities, which has its head office in Québec City, and in the International Association of French-speaking Mayors. It is also a member of the International Network for the Improvement of Local Government, which brings together 50 cities from throughout the world.


heritage
WOMEN
urban issues
right to housing
society
innovation
international exchanges
FAMILIES
prospects
habitat
environment
HABITAT
fulfillment
governance
partnership
economy
generations

GENERAL PROSPECTS: DEVELOPING A SUSTAINABLE HABITAT

Based on the review of its 1996 commitments, the Québec government intends, in the coming years, to focus its efforts on the priorities set out below, in the habitat-related sectors described in this report.

Consolidate means to ensure the right to housing and a good social mix

In its report to the Second United Nations Conference on Human Establishments (*Habitat II*) in 1996, Québec stated its intention to maintain and increase solidarity with the poorly housed. To do this, it adopted a *Government Plan of Action for Housing, 1997-2001*, which broadened the range of social housing assistance. Given the more favourable economic context now prevailing, the government intends to consolidate the steps it has already taken to ensure real access to appropriate housing in good quality environments, by reviewing and harmonizing its habitat sector interventions.

In the first instance, this will mean giving new impetus to social housing by basing future development on a better-organized management system at the local and regional levels, and by using the social economy to reach underprivileged and vulnerable households. It will also be a way of contributing to the government's efforts to prevent poverty and exclusion, through an inter-sector approach linking social and economic development, health and quality of life at home.

Another approach that will be used to eliminate exclusion factors and restore environments with due regard for social mix and sustainable development will be a concentration of partnership-managed methods including renovation, redevelopment, home ownership support and urban planning in the revitalization and renewal of deteriorated zones in major cities. Lastly, the government will work to introduce conditions conducive to economic vitality in the housing industry, so as to enhance its ability to produce affordable housing. This initiative will also help it achieve its social habitat-related objectives.

Integrate and enhance the scope of measures designed to prevent poverty and exclusion

The Québec government has produced a report entitled *Social Development in Québec* (1995-2000), which reviews its efforts to prevent poverty and exclusion and considers future prospects in the field. The report was submitted to the United Nations General Assembly in June 2000. The government intends to continue its efforts in this respect, upholding Québec's model of social justice and basing its actions on a renewed consensus in favour of a differentiated, adapted approach focused on work incentives and the potential of individuals and communities.

In view of the fact that some social groups are more affected by poverty than others, it is extremely important for any social development and poverty prevention strategy to include targeted, adapted, inter-sector actions within an integrated, global perspective. The recent appointment of a Minister for the Elimination of Poverty and Exclusion illustrates the priority given by the Québec government to this social objective, as well as its firm intention to work across sector borders. At the same time, the government, while maintaining its emphasis on equality of opportunity in education, intends to give priority to work incentives, assistance for families, special measures for young people receiving income security, support for community development in underprivileged areas, community action and the social economy.

Continue and extend the application of the principle of male-female equality

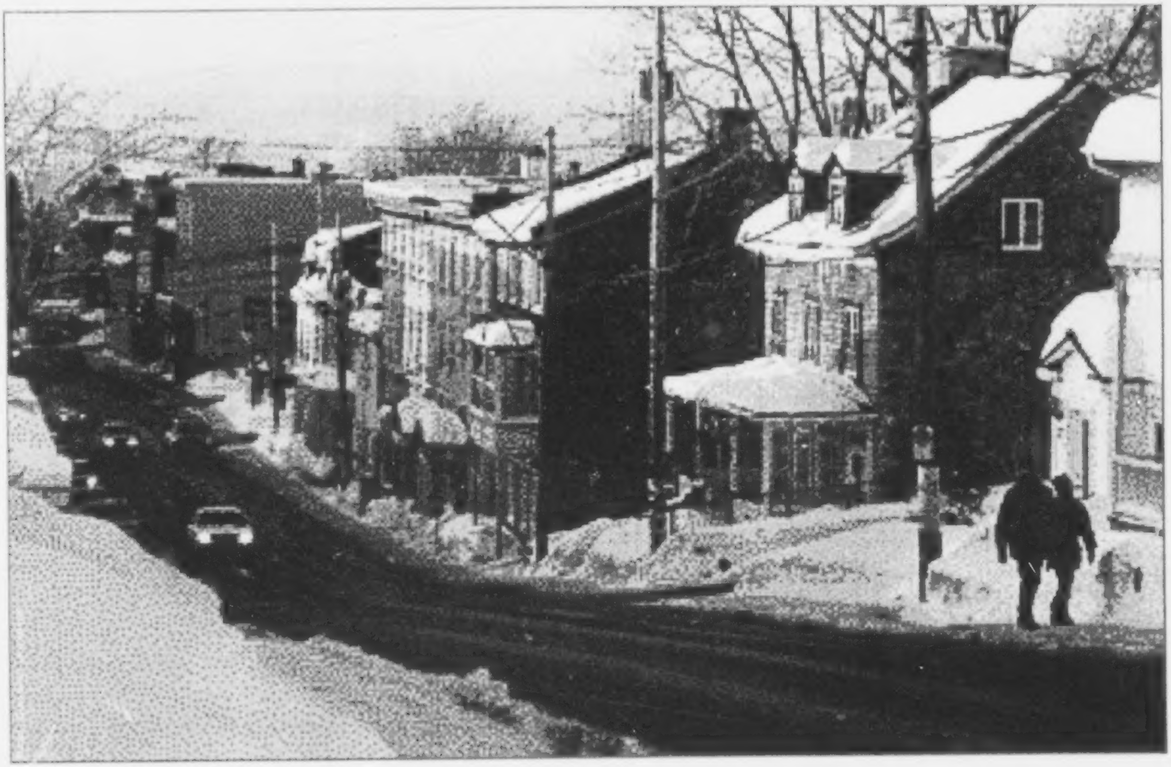
The Québec government has also followed up on the commitment made in its previous report to "develop, test and progressively apply a differentiated analysis according to gender in all areas of government policy". The commitments made by the Québec government in Beijing were given concrete form in the *1997-2000 Action Program for All Québec Women*, in the form of a project involving concerted action by several government departments and organizations and raising issues of capital importance in the quest for male-female equality.

The project has been carried forward in the *2000-2003 Action Program - Equality for All Québec Women.* This new program contains a set of actions aimed, regardless of their scope or scale, at recognizing the principle of equality and establishing equal social, cultural, economic, legal and political conditions for men and women. The growing numbers of women involved in regional development and public management are significant factors in this effort, especially with regard to development and governance issues relevant to habitat.

Ensure environmental sustainability while respecting Québec's commitments

The Québec government has adopted a *2000-2002 Plan of Action on Climate Change*, which will lead to changes in the use of energy resources. The transportation sector will also be subject to change, since a national policy now requires interventions in this field to be focused on sustainable development, in particular by reducing greenhouse gas emissions. At the same time, the government intends to adopt a water management policy suited to the situation in Québec.

With regard to the conservation of biological diversity and natural resources, Québec intends to create new protected areas within its territory, increasing the total size of such areas from 3% to 8% of the total area of Québec by the year 2005. Waste management should also be improved in the coming years with the adoption of a new government plan of action for the period 1998-2008, which will lead to increased participation by all players and a fairer division of the financial burden. Lastly, steps will be taken to strengthen and structure in a better way initiatives to prevent disasters and environmental degradation.



Continue the local governance renewal process initiated by the municipal reorganization

The current municipal reform will have the effect of consolidating local municipalities and strengthening urban areas and regional county municipalities. Following this process, municipal authorities will be asked to review their policies governing public services and economic, social and cultural development.

Municipal authorities will need new economic development strategies that will enable them to face up to the challenges of globalization and the emergence of the knowledge society. They will also need to review their land use planning policies so as to better plan development and counter urban sprawl, preserve resources and the collective heritage, improve the general quality of the living environment, revitalize neighbourhoods in difficulty and rehabilitate infrastructures. In addition, local public service management and delivery methods will need to be adapted to environmental issues and to the new needs generated by the demographic slowdown, ageing and migration phenomena that will mark Québec society in the coming decades.

To ensure that they make more effective use of their new public service policies, the municipalities will be asked to develop new partnership arrangements with private enterprises, community organizations and other public bodies such as the education and health networks. Results-oriented management mechanisms will help improve relations between different administrative levels and increase transparency in public management. Lastly, better democratic control mechanisms will help meet the growing demands of the population. The use of new information technologies will also facilitate access to municipal services, change the exercise of local democracy, forge contacts between key local and regional development stakeholders, and help the regions to promote their economies and tourist industries.

Encourage international cooperation at the service of habitat and sustainable development

Québec is involved in a modern form of cooperation from which all partner states are able to benefit. Its aim in developing cooperative projects with partners is to seek solutions to the shared problems facing their respective societies. Cooperation is at the heart of several new alliances formed by Québec, in the shape of institutional networks, closer relationships between public stakeholders and the civil society, and public mobilization around sustainable development issues.

It is in this way that Québec intends to continue to generate and support cooperative projects in the urban planning sector, relating in particular to sensitive neighbourhoods, shoreline development and inter-generational housing. With regard to population ageing, Québec's international cooperative initiatives support research into pre-retirement lifestyles, older workers and home care. At a broader level, Québec is interested in promoting international cooperation in sectors related directly or indirectly to habitat, including the fight against poverty, environmental protection, the development of the social economy, education, vulnerable youth, youth in training, tele-medicine, access to new information technologies and modernization of public administration structures.

Photo Serge Côté - [illegible]

APPENDIX

International Covenants and Pacts by which Québec has declared itself bound

International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights
(Order-in-Council 1438-76, April 21, 1976)

International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights
(Order-in-Council 1438-76, April 21, 1976)

Optional Protocol to the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights
(Order-in-Council 1438-76, April 21, 1976)

Declaration recognizing the jurisdiction of the Human Rights Committee to accept and consider applications made concerning Québec
(Order-in-Council 3343-78, November 2, 1978)

International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination
(Order-in-Council 1471-78, May 10, 1978)

Declaration on the Protection of All People Against Torture and Other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment
(Order-in-Council 1746-79, June 20, 1979)

Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women
(Order-in-Council 2894-81, October 20, 1981)

Convention against Torture and Other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment
(Order-in-Council 912-87, June 10, 1987)

Convention on the Rights of the Child
(Order-in-Council 1676-91, December 9, 1991)

United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change
(Order-in-Council 1669-92, November 25, 1992)

Convention on Biological Diversity
(Order-in-Council 1668-92, November 25, 1992)

Convention against the Worst Forms of Child Labour, 1999
(Order-in-Council 630-2000, May 24, 2000)

REFERENCES

Femmes, Women, Mujeres. Secrétariat à la condition féminine, 2000.

L'action gouvernementale en habitation : orientations et plan d'action. Société d'habitation du Québec, 1997.

Les femmes et le logement. Un profil quantitatif de la situation résidentielle des femmes au Québec. Société d'habitation du Québec, 2000.

Le développement social au Québec 1995-2000, Bilan au regard des décisions prises au Sommet mondial pour le développement social. Ministère du Conseil exécutif, Secrétariat du Comité ministériel du développement social, Québec, 2000.

Protection des rives, du littoral et des plaines inondables : Guide des bonnes pratiques. Ministère de l'Environnement et de la Faune, Service de l'aménagement et de la protection des rives et du littoral, Les publications du Québec, 1998.

4ème Plan d'action en matière de politique familiale 2000-2002, Redonner droit de cité aux familles sherbrookoises. Ville de Sherbrooke, Services récréatifs et communautaires, 2000.

La réorganisation municipale — Changer les façons de faire pour mieux servir le citoyen. Ministère des Affaires municipales et de la Métropole, 2000.

Les orientations du Gouvernement en matière d'aménagement du territoire — Pour un aménagement concerté du territoire. Ministère des Affaires municipales, 1994.

Les orientations du Gouvernement en matière d'aménagement du territoire — Document complémentaire. Ministère des Affaires municipales, 1995.

Les orientations du Gouvernement en matière d'aménagement du territoire — La protection du territoire et des activités agricoles. Ministère des Affaires municipales, 1997.

For additional information:

General information on Québec
Ministère des Relations internationales
Direction générale des affaires publiques
Édifice Hector-Fabre
525, boul. René-Lévesque Est, 4e étage
Québec (Québec) G1R 5R9
Telephone: (418) 649-2345
Fax: (418) 649-2656
E-mail: communications@mri.gouv.qc.ca
www.mri.gouv.qc.ca

Additionnal information on housing
Société d'habitation du Québec
Direction des communications
1054, rue Louis-Alexandre-Taschereau
Aile Saint-Amable, 3e étage
Québec (Québec) G1R 5E7
Telephone: (418) 643-7676
Fax: (418) 643-4560
E-mail: infoshq@shq.gouv.qc.ca
www.shq.gouv.qc.ca

Gouvernement du Québec Internet site
www.gouv.qc.ca

Cette publication est également disponible en français.
Esta publicación también está disponible en español.